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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to assist 13 newly hired special education teachers to function more effectively. Data indicated that newly hired teachers, who were non-certified teachers, teachers who were certified but working out of their area of certification, and first year teachers, did not know how to work with children with special needs, write Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), complete referrals, hold IEP meetings with parents, or adhere to time-lines. Following inservice training, technical assistance, and the development of a special education teacher's guidebook, teachers were assigned mentors at each school site to help them become knowledgeable about their job duties. Analysis of the data revealed that the new special education teachers held IEP meetings within the timelines and turned the IEPs into the special education office in a timely manner. The teachers also individualized lessons according to the students' needs. (Contains 42 references.) (Author/CR)

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Assisting Newly Hired Special Education Teachers To Function More Effectively Through Inservice Training and Mentoring on all Grade Levels

ED 430 340

by
Helen J. Wyatt
Cluster 84

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Nova Southeastern University
1998

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Practicum Approval Sheet

This practicum took place as described.

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Verifier: Doretha Woodfork

Supervisor of Special Education

Title

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August 18, 1998

Date

This practicum report was submitted by Helen J. Wyatt under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

10/13/98

Date of Final Approval of Report

Barbara Christina

Barbara A. Christina, Ed.D., Adviser

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Barbara A. Christina, Ed.D., Adviser

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Abstract

Assisting Newly Hired Special Education Teachers To Function More Effectively Through Inservice Training and Mentoring on all Grade Levels, Wyatt, Helen J., 1998: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program In Child and Youth Studies. Special Services/Exceptional Education. Mentoring/Mentors/Beginning Teachers/First Year Teachers/Classroom Management/Teacher Education/Teacher Attrition/Special Education/Orientation/Workshops/Inservice

This practicum was designed to assist newly hired special education teachers to function more effectively. Newly hired teachers in the writer's school district were not prepared to teach as special education teachers. They were either non-certified, certified but working out of their area of certification and/or first year teachers. They did not know how to work with children with special needs, write individual educational plans (IEPs), complete referrals, hold IEP meetings with parents, nor did they adhere to time lines.

The writer conducted inservice training, rendered technical assistance, and designed a new special education teacher's guidebook. The teachers were assigned mentors at each school site to help them become knowledgeable of their job duties.

Analysis of the data revealed that the new special education teachers are holding IEP meetings within the time lines, and turning the IEPs into the special education office in a timely manner. The teachers are also individualizing lessons according to the students' needs.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Description of Community

The community in which this practicum took place is located in an east central rural county/parish, along the eastern border of the state. Situated along a major river, this area is rich in historic and natural resources. The county/parish's location along the river provides direct access to numerous markets throughout the state and the region. It is strategically situated along a renowned river, and its proximity to the major cities in the region provides industry a wide range of opportunities for market access, transportation and recreation.

A major river was instrumental in changing the complexion of the town in the 1930's as the entire town was moved to accommodate the changing course of this river. Today, the county/parish seat is in the midst of planning, with the assistance of an architectural team from a nearby university, a Riverfront Development Plan which will incorporate the historical aspect of the city.

The Riverfront Development Plan includes convention space, a hotel, bike paths, a marina, restaurants, shops, amphitheater, and an historical interpretive center combined with a state welcome center. This development would support a possible 200 to 300 employees and draw thousands of tourists.

The economic base of this county/parish consists of companies in the apparel, chemical, oil, gas, and wood products. Its hard-working labor force of 8,950, excellent transportation network, abundant raw materials, and land for commercial and industrial development make this county/parish an ideal prospect for business investment.

This county/parish is made up of five towns, which is the home to 23,631 people in

an area of 717 square miles Urban population is 10,279 which is 43 6% and the rural population is 13,352 which is 56 5% (farm population is 412) The population is 63% Caucasian, 36% Blacks, 1% Other (American Indian, Asian, etc), 47% male and 53% female The projected population for the year 2010 is 21,640 which will consist of 12,500 Caucasian and 9,140 Blacks and Other

According to the State's Employment Security Office, the following data is characteristics of this district

1 Per capita personal income is $14,372 which is 81 6% of the State average of $17,622 and 66 2% of the national average, $21,696

2 The national unemployment rate is 4 9%, the state is 5 7%, while the unemployment rate in this area as of September 1997 was 10 4%

3 There are 24 53% of adults 25 and over with an 8th grade education

4 There are 9 33% who graduated from high school

5 7 02% graduated from 4 years of college and 4 46% graduated from 5 years or above

Unique for this community is the $534 million hydroelectric station - the largest prefabricated power plant in the world and the only hydroelectric power station in this state Another unique feature for this community is the active role business partners play to improve education in this district by adopting schools

Writer's Work Setting

The school system is the largest employer in this county/parish There are approximately 600 employees, including 325 teachers, principals and librarians This school

system serves 4,442 students on 11 campuses, which includes approximately 400 special education students. There are eight elementary (K-8) schools and three secondary (9^{th}-12^{th}) schools. There is one private school with an enrollment of 365 students.

The school's district's central office staff consists of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of academic affairs, director of administrative services & staff development, director of federal programs, business manager, assistant business manager, director of transportation, director of food services, personnel coordinator, supervisor of special education, director of welfare and attendance, drug coordinator, supervisor of data processing service, grant writer, and clerical personnel.

There are approximately 70 pupil appraisals and special education staff members, one social worker, three psychologists, three speech and language pathologists, two educational diagnosticians, one occupational therapist, two adapted physical education teachers, one IEP facilitator, 30 special education teachers and 25 paraprofessionals.

The mission of this school system embraces the concept that all children can learn. The board pledged to provide all students with a broad range of educational experiences which are directed by qualified personnel. The board believes that the educational program must create opportunities for each child to become cognizant of his/her rights and responsibilities as a member of a democratic society and to develop knowledge and skills which will lead to fulfilling his/her potential as a productive member of the community. The board believes that maintaining close ties to community leaders, business leaders, parents, and other agencies will enhance its ability to fulfill its mission as an agent of the community.

A unique feature of this work setting is that the superintendent and the board are

children-oriented, not in words only, but in actuality. Staff development is mandatory. Professional growth is recommended, and encouraged by providing monetary support for travel, for boarding, for attending workshops, and for enrolling in courses to become certified in needed areas. This board encourages all professional personnel to attend programs of continuing education and in-service designed to promote professional and technical growth in all areas of the curriculum. This board provides two full days for in-service meetings, all targeted personnel are expected to attend and to participate.

Unique to this district are the parent centers that are equipped with laptop computers and a variety of learning aids which parents could check out to assist their children. Another unique feature is that the use of technology in the instructional program is being emphasized. All school's libraries/media centers have computers and access to the Internet. Many classrooms throughout the parish/county have computers and Internet access. All offices have Internet access. This district also sponsors a well-established program of adult education.

There are eight colleges and universities within two hours of this county/parish. There are three vocational technical institutes within commuting distance.

Writer's Role

The writer is an IEP Facilitator in the special education department which serves approximately 400 students. The IEP Facilitator ensures that an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) is developed for students within 30 days of the evaluation report's dissemination date and that parental consent is obtained prior to placement.

This IEP Facilitator renders technical assistance to special education teachers on an as

needed basis and also provides inservice training to all special education teachers on various subjects This writer also assists the supervisor of special education in completing various reports

Chapter II: Study of the Problem

Problem Statement

The problem to be solved in this practicum was that newly hired teachers were not prepared to teach as special education teachers.

Problem Description

Special education teachers needed to know how to work with children with varied exceptionalities, write individual educational plans, complete referrals, hold IEP meetings with parents, and how to keep up with timelines.

There were the lack of available certified teachers in the area of special education, which caused the board to fill the positions with uncertified personnel who had no concept of special educational terminologies, the children's exceptionalities, or IEPs/strategies necessary to meet special children needs.

The vacant positions were sometimes filled with bitter certified special education teachers who no longer wanted to teach special education, but would rather teach regular education. Many beginning teachers had not passed the National Teachers Examination (NTE) which contributed to high teacher turnover (teacher attrition).

Problem Documentation

Five new teachers had not acquired the skills and/or techniques needed to properly work with students with special needs during the 1997-98 school year. During classroom visits, the writer had observed that children were sitting in a straight row being taught as if they were in a regular education class. The writer also observed that teachers were not allowing for individual differences, all children were being taught the same way. IEPs were

not completed in a timely manner.

Classroom management was observed to be producing an atmosphere that was not conducive to learning in 5 of 13 classrooms visited. The environment was not conducive for learning because the class was disrupted continuously. Through interviews, the writer found that the new teachers were frustrated.

Causative Analysis

Newly hired uncertified teachers had problems with classroom discipline, dealing with individual differences, communicating with parents, understanding special education terminologies, writing IEPs and dealing with problems of individual students. The teachers' class rosters were monitored on a monthly basis to check IEP and evaluation dates, making sure all were within timelines. Thirty students' files were monitored, six of the individualized educational plans were not following timelines. The writer made a classroom visitation, conferenced with the teachers and gave them technical assistance; results indicated that five newly hired special education teachers did not know how to write IEPs, nor did they know anything about teaching the children with special needs.

Many beginning teachers had not passed the National Teachers Examination (NTE) which contributed to high teacher turnover (teacher attrition). Completing the annual school's report for the past eight years led to the identification of the problem. Personnel files at the special education office were reviewed to determine the certification status of new teachers and their areas of specialization. The writer found that seven out of 30 special education teachers are certified in regular education, but not in special education, one is certified in another area of special education, but not in the area in which she was teaching;

one had been teaching regular education, but due to the need, she was placed in special education, and four had not passed the National Teachers Examination (NTE), one was not in education.

Teacher attrition, for whatever the reason, caused teacher shortage. In reviewing the special education teachers' rosters from the school year, 1996-1997, the writer found that the district had lost four teachers, one infancy and toddler's teacher, two high school special education generic mild/moderate teachers, and one upper elementary generic mild/moderate teacher. The personnel files were reviewed, and the teachers were interviewed to determine their reasons for leaving. After conversing with the four teachers, it was found that they did not pass the NTE.

There was no guidebook which new special education teachers could use as a reference. As an employee of the special education department, the writer was aware that there was no written guidebook available.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

First year teachers had many concerns. They expressed anxiety about discipline, student motivation, testing, and lesson planning, to name a few concerns. During the 1988-89 school year, the New York City Board of Education recognized that new teachers had problems establishing working relationships with parents, gaining an awareness of students with needs, and knowing how to meet their needs; and organizing and managing the classroom (Guerrero & Mason, 1989, Kiley & Coulby, 1992; Rupp, 1988; Wagner & Impellizzeri, 1988).

In 1989, Manley, Siudzinski & Varah of Wisconsin-Whitewater indicated that the

most frequently expressed concerns by new teachers were communicating with parents, maintaining discipline, dealing with individual differences, delivering effective lessons, and organizing the classroom (Peterson & Wesley, 1993). Veenman compiled the results of 84 studies of beginning teachers' concerns; 55 completed in the United States; 7 in the West Indies; 6 in the United Kingdom; 5 in the Netherlands; 4 in Australia; 2 in Austria and Canada; and 1 in Finland and Switzerland; citing that the top five problems were (a) classroom discipline, (b) motivating students, (c) dealing with individual students, (d) assessing students' work, and (e) relations' with parents.

Teacher attrition was another major problem confronting professionals in special education. The most common reason identified for special education teacher attrition was the excessive paper work. The additional paper work required of special education teachers primarily consisted of maintenance of data concerning the implementation of the goals and objectives on the students' individualized education programs. Another important paper work consisted of the data collected and maintained by the special education teachers pertaining to regression and recoupment for those students who might need extended school year program and services. Brownell & Smith, (1993) and Platt & Olson, (1990) indicated that some of the determining factors whether to remain in or to leave special education classrooms are stress, perceived manageability of workload and certification status. Attrition caused by isolation, burnout, stress, and related factors is elevated among special educators. Brownell, Smith & Miller (1995) of the University of Florida commented that hiring uncertified teachers is a problem because these teachers are more likely to leave, threatening the stability of special education programs. In special education, the proportion of younger

teachers appears to be greater than for general education, and the overall attrition rate is also higher in special education than in general education (Lauritzen, 1988). Attrition is a central feature in shortages of qualified teachers in the United States. Most newly hired teachers in education stem from the need to replace teachers who leave, rather than from the demands of expanding enrollments or new programs (Grissmer & Kirby, 1987).

Too few beginning teachers are adequately prepared. The National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (1996) reported that more than 12% of all newly hired teachers enter the workplace without any training at all, another 15% enter without having fully met state standards. Evans (1996) of the University of California-Irvine found that teacher-educators are not the blame for teachers being inadequately prepared, but the single biggest blame for unqualified teachers lies with those who believe that anyone can teach. Imig (1997) of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education indicated that emergency certificates and discounted professional preparation are issued during a teacher shortage to get warm bodies in the schools; this results in ill-prepared teachers. Ingersoll (1997) of the University of Georgia recognized that one cause for underqualified teachers is the problem of out-of-field teaching, teachers teaching subjects which do not match their training.

A paper presented in January 26, 1990 at the Annual Conference of The Southwestern Educational Research Association, Austin, Texas by Jean Kucker, Ph.D., and Patricia Haensly, Ph.D. of Texas A & M University agreed that beginning teachers do need specific help, especially maintaining discipline, delivering effective lessons, and maintaining classroom management. Bradley (1996) of Washington writes about the 151-page report

presented by the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (1990), indicting current practices which include: inadequate teacher education, bureaucratic hiring practices, and the placement of unprepared teachers in classrooms.

Veenman (1984) commented that the most frequently stated concerns of beginning teachers were classroom discipline, student motivation, dealing with individual differences, testing and assessment, communication with parents, organization of the classroom, insufficient materials and supplies, and dealing with problems of individual students. Furtwengler (1995) concurs that special education teachers in addition to sharing all the other problems, also have to deal with collaboration needs, mastery of IEP requirements, and supervision of paraprofessionals. Gonzalez (1995) of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education in Alexandria, Virginia stated that teacher attrition is a result of non certification in the area taught; and lower scores on the National Teacher Examination.

Thompson (1995) noted that "new teachers are concerned about possessing the competence and confidence that they perceive other faculty have, and they quickly reach a point where they do not ask for help from them" (p. 269). He goes on to say that this pattern leads to isolation from peers.

In summary, the teachers need to know what is expected of them from the district and from the special education department. They don't want total autonomy in making decisions but they do want control over when they need help in making decisions. New teachers need to be provided information about the school facilities, rules and procedures, and the principal's expectations for teaching performance. Throughout the year, beginning teachers

need to be informed of procedures and policies that affect them or their students. Basically, teachers need to know what's expected from them.

Chapter III Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Instruments

Goal and Expectation

The goal of this practicum was that newly hired teachers would be prepared to teach as special education teachers

Expected Outcomes

The following outcomes were projected for this practicum

1 Teachers will submit timely automated Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students The outcome will be measured by the actual, physical presence of the IEPs received from 13 of 13 teachers Compliance of 13 teachers turning in IEPs on time and completed correctly will be the standard accepted as a demonstration of success A monitoring checklist will be used to monitor IEPs

2 Teachers will individualize lessons according to the students' needs Classrooms will be visited monthly and lesson plans will be checked against the IEPs for at least four students per class randomly chosen Compliance of 18 out of 20 days will be accepted as a demonstration of success

Measurement of Outcome

The class rosters generated from the State's Department of Education Lanser (state's network for special education reports) data would be checked monthly for IEP dates Checklists were going to be developed and used to obtain data needed to make sure timelines were met The IEP monitoring checklist would provide the monitor's responses and comments for the teachers' reference and/or corrections (see Appendix A) IEP dates have

to comply with federal and state requirements so that the school district is in compliance. A school district out of compliance would have serious ramifications for funding. Funding can be withdrawn or denied if a district continues to be in a non-compliance status.

A self-review checklist was going to be developed by the writer and distributed to the special education teachers to use as a self monitoring device in checking their IEPs and lesson plans. It would have been deemed a success if each teacher would use it to check his/her own progress (see Appendix B). The writer was planning to use a monthly lesson plan checklist to check for individualization of lessons for at least four students chosen randomly from 13 teachers' classrooms (see Appendix C).

Chapter IV: Solution Strategy

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

In Chapter II, the problem to be solved was stated as: Newly hired teachers were not prepared to teach as special education teachers.

Special education teachers needed to know how to work with children with varied exceptionalities, write individual educational plans, complete referrals, hold IEP meetings with parents and keep up with timelines. The situation just described was becoming more of a problem each year. Many teachers hired to teach special education were not certified and were not prepared to teach as special education teachers.

During the 1994-95 school year, the University of California-Irvine Department of Education and six Orange County School Districts selected as one of their Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA), a project which features a support triad involving the site principal, a site support provider, and a university partner. The site principal would provide needed support, feedback and advice to beginning teachers. Training/orientation would be provided at the school and would include the site's principal, special education supervisor and/or the IEP facilitator. The training would provide the teachers with various strategies and techniques needed to fulfill job expectations of the principal/special education supervisor.

The support provider would serve as a mentor at the school's site. Each novice teacher would be assigned a seasoned special education teacher at his/her site as a mentor (Kucker & Haensly, 1990; Marquardt, Fountain, Guthnecht & Stoddard, 1994; McKenna, 1988; Smith-Davis & Cohen, 1989). Mentoring would help the new teachers develop the

skills and strategies, and judgment that successful teachers possess (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Gray & Gray, 1987). Willis and Auer (1988) suggested that mentors would help new teachers clarify their views of the teaching profession and could offer personal and professional support to overcome feelings of isolation. Fellow-teachers as mentors are the most useful and consistent source of psychological and technical support (Egan, 1986; Gehrke & Kay, 1984).

Ellis (1998) eluded to the fact that in Georgia, school administrators realize that there is a gap between the training entry-level teachers get in college and the knowledge they must have in the real world. With a large population of brand-new teachers hired each year, the district administrators provide special introductory programs for new teachers and provide them with mentors and advisers. They provide the new teachers a three-day induction course. They learn how to fill out forms and follow the different administrative procedures of the school system. Those teachers who have just finished their first year on the job are given a chance to talk to the brand-new teachers. A comfort zone is established, the new teachers go to their schools on the third day, spend time with the principals, and set up their classrooms.

According to Jensen (1987), although induction formats vary, they all contain the common feature of promoting a high level of interaction among new teachers, their colleagues, and administrators. Jensen (1987, p. 10) also describes three induction models.

1. In one model, the energies of school and higher education personnel are combined. Teacher educators work together with district administrators and classroom teachers to ensure that the transition from student teaching to full-

time teaching is smooth

2 Another model emphasizes supervision and coaching from the building administrator or from district staff development personnel In some cases, the first year of teaching is considered as an internship featuring intensive feedback from district supervisors

3 A common model of induction uses experienced teachers as mentors, who provide the new teacher with legitimate access to a colleague's expertise The mentor program provides a sounding board for the new teacher's questions and concerns, and mentor teachers may provide formal classroom observations in a format of clinical supervision

"A mentor should be an opener of doors, a role model, a confidant, and a successful leader Most of all, the mentor should be dedicated to the success of the protégé" (Wildman, 1985, p 31) In a survey of 290 new teachers participating in Beginning Teacher Program, Huffman and Leak (1986) found that it was important to have mentors with knowledge and experience in the same subject, specialty, or grade level as the novice teachers they assisted Outcomes of this survey also suggested the importance of adequate time for informal planning and conversation between mentors and beginning teachers

Fox and Singletary (1986) stated that it is just as important for a new teacher to relate closely and substantively to his or her peers as to a mentor "Frequent, regular meetings with individuals who are experiencing similar situations and problems provide new teachers with an opportunity to exchange ideas and views These exchanges can also minimize feelings of isolation" (p 14) Though most induction programs include such content as faculty and

facility orientation, classroom management, classroom discipline, professional conduct, school expectations, and similar content (ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, 1986). Fox and Singletary (1986) also point out that few of these programs emphasize the development of a "reflective orientation and the skills necessary to self-evaluation" (p. 12).

Description of Selected Solutions

To help new teachers, Dade County Public Schools came up with a program called Peers Helping Peers (PHP), and Teachers Teaching Teachers (TTT) Model (Wiles & Bondi, 1991). This innovative program empowers new teachers to play an important role in their own development, and the improvement of their profession. Training by peers is cost effective and relevant, since it allows for immediate feedback at the classroom level. Through conferencing, coaching and counseling, new teachers can learn different methods and strategies to help them become more successful in performing their job duties.

McAllister and Neubert's (1995) book includes several scenarios which make up the peer coaching process that takes new teachers through the lesson planning, execution, observation, feedback, reflection, and assessment. With constructive feedback, peer coaches build each other's self-assurance as effective teachers. Through peer coaching, new teachers offer each other valuable feedback on varied teaching techniques tried in their classrooms. Preservice peer coaching is a very interesting idea that the writer feels has real merit.

The tasks in solving the problem introduced in Chapter II revolved around developing a guidebook for new special education teachers, inservicing/training, and providing technical assistance to newly hired teachers. This solution would ensure that new teachers would have a hard copy of the guidelines to which they could refer when needed. Inservice training

would provide new teachers with various strategies and/or techniques needed to work with children in special education. Technical assistance would be available for one-on-one consultation as needed.

Report of Action Taken

Month 1: Week 1

The writer inserviced all new special education teachers for one-half day telling them about meeting timelines and on how to correctly schedule and conduct IEP meetings. The teachers were informed that the IEP must be developed for each student with a disability within 30 calendar days after eligibility determination. The IEP must be developed before actual placement, and initiation of special education and related services. No special education and related services can be provided prior to the development of the IEP. Finally, all IEPs must be reviewed at least annually by the IEP committee. Parents, legal guardian or surrogate parents must receive prior notification in writing of each IEP meeting. The writer also pointed out to the teachers that when developing lesson plans for special education students, the first thing one must keep in mind is to follow the IEP for each student. IEPs that were turned in to the special education office were monitored. Lesson plans were checked against four students' IEPs chosen randomly from each class. This was to ensure that the teachers were using the IEPs to write their lesson plans meeting each child's individual needs. Technical assistance was rendered when and where needed. The writer began collecting data for a guidebook.

Month 1: Week 2

The writer contacted the principals at each school site about assigning each new

special education teacher a mentor. The principals were excited about the idea and said that they thought this was a very good idea. Many of the principals assigned mentors shortly thereafter. IEPs turned in were monitored by the writer. The writer would check the IEPs' meeting date, the evaluation date, the specific current performances, the goals and objectives, modifications needed for participation in regular education, extended school year section, the general student's information, and the time making sure that each form was completed correctly and that each child's needs were being met. The writer collected materials on various strategies to use when teaching students with varied exceptionalities for the guidebook. The writer also gave technical assistance on an as needed basis on how to use the automated IEP program.

Month 1. Week 3

The writer monitored IEPs and collected data for the guidebook. The writer rendered technical assistance on an as needed basis. Teachers called for various reasons, some for full and effective notices to send to parents for review IEP meetings, others because they needed help to complete an IEP, or sometimes it was to attend an IEP meeting, and/or to check a printer or the computer. The writer spot checked 12 students' IEPs this week, randomly selected. The writer gave feedback to the teachers. The feedback provided teachers with directions on how to use IEPs to write lesson plans.

Month 1. Week 4

The writer pulled LANSER (State network of special education reports) data from the State Department of Education and checked for out-of-timeline IEP dates. The teachers were notified of any discrepancies and given a deadline date to make adjustments. Technical

assistance was given when needed. The writer began typing the guidebook.

Month 2, Week 1

The writer along with the Regional Director provided inservice training for all special education teachers for a half-day (see Appendix E). The State Department of Education changed the IEP forms and was requiring that all IEPs be updated by June 15, 1998. This half-day inservice was devoted to the new IEP for all special education teachers, instead of just the new special education teachers. The writer didn't expect to, but had to install the new automated IEP program on all the special education teachers' computers. The new assignment with the IEP forms caused a lot of extra work, but did not inhibit the writer's outcome. Lesson plans were checked and technical assistance was given. The writer visited six classrooms unannounced. The writer used a Lesson Plan Checklist to gather data. The lesson plans were checked for each day of the month for four students per class, randomly chosen. The writer met with the teachers individually and showed them how to write lesson plans appropriately for meeting the needs of their students. The writer continued to type the guidebook.

Month 2, Week 2

The writer continued to type the guidebook. Updated IEPs were being monitored as they were turned into the special education's office by the writer. The writer also checked IEPs for the correct dates, required components, measurable goals and objectives. The writer visited several classrooms rendering technical assistance on how to write IEPs using the automated IEP program.

Month 2: Week 3

The writer devoted the entire week to typing the guidebook and monitoring IEPs. The writer met with the teachers individually to review the requirements of writing IEPs that contained all the required components, and on how to use the IEP goals and objectives to write their lesson plans.

Month 2: Week 4

The writer continued to monitor IEPs. The writer also finished typing and proofreading the guidebook. LANSER data were pulled up from the State Department of Education, IEP dates were checked. The writer mailed out notification to teachers who had out-of-timelined IEPs. The writer explained to these teachers that IEPs have to be updated annually on or before the due date.

Month 3: Week 1

The writer monitored IEPs on a continuous basis. Lesson plans were checked using a lesson plan checklist (see Appendix D). The writer visited seven classrooms unannounced to check lesson plans. When the writer asked the teachers how did they develop their lesson plans, some teachers said that they used their students' IEPs as their guide. Other teachers said that they developed their lesson plans based on what the students had previously accomplished. The teachers who used the IEPs to develop their lesson plans had them readily available and said that they used them daily making sure that they were meeting each child's needs. A few of the teachers had to look for their IEPs. The writer randomly checked four students' IEPs in the teachers' classes to make sure that they were actually using the students' IEPs to write lesson plans. The writer put the guidebook together and

sent it to the media center to be copied and bound

Month 3 Week 2

The guidebook was picked up by the writer from the media center. The books had black spiral backs and purple covers. The writer was pleased at the appearance of the books. The writer monitored IEPs. Monitoring IEPs was a continuous process for the writer. IEPs must have the correct dates, required components, measurable goals and objectives. If the IEPs had any missing components, the writer returned them to the teachers with an explanation on how to make correction.

Month 3 Week 3

The writer scheduled a meeting for all new special education teachers to attend in the fourth week. The purpose of the meeting would be to give the teachers the newly developed guidebook, and to answer any questions that they might have. Principals were telephoned to find out how the mentoring program was working in their schools. The writer was informed that the program was working well in all schools. The teachers stated that they wanted a year-long assistance program. One said, "Don't forget that at the end of the school year we are still beginning teachers. We have never ended a school year before."

Month 3 Week 4

The writer met with all new special education teachers to pass out the newly written guidebook (see Appendix F). A guidebook was also given to all special education teachers. A five-question Likert scale questionnaire was administered to the teachers concerning the effectiveness of the guidebook (see Appendix E). The teachers felt this book would be an effective reference tool for them. It was expressed that they should have had something like

this a long time ago. The teachers thanked the writer for being concerned and for taking the initiative to develop a guidebook for their use. The writer explained to the teachers that the guidebook would be updated as needed.

Chapter V: Results

grades 3 through 12 for the grade level appropriate for the student's

Results

chronological age in one or more of the following areas:

Newly hired teachers in this district were not prepared to teach as special education

1. Reading recognition

teachers. They did not know how to work with children with diverse exceptionalities, write

2. Reading comprehension

individual educational plans, complete referrals, hold IEP meetings with parents nor did they

3. Math calculations

adhere to time lines. These teachers had no concept of special educational terminologies, the

4. Math reasoning

children's exceptionalities nor IEPs/strategies necessary to meet special children's needs.

5. Oral expression

The goal of this practicum was that newly hired teachers would be prepared to teach as

6. Listening comprehension

special education teachers. The writer would assist newly hired special education teachers to

7. Written expression

function more effectively.

8. Other age-appropriate developmental skill areas when more

The following outcomes were projected for this practicum.

appropriate for kindergarten students

1. Teachers will submit timely automated Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

Classroom design

for students. The outcome will be measured by the actual, physical presence

A wide variety of instructional settings should be used in classrooms for the learning

of the IEPs received from 13 of 13 teachers. Compliance of 13 teachers

disabled student. Small group instruction, individual learning centers and individualized

turning in IEPs on time and completed correctly will be the standard accepted

activities to provide for the development of problem solving techniques are deemed

as a demonstration of success. A monitoring checklist would be used to

appropriate.

monitor IEPs (see Appendix A)

Reading and math skills are the primary emphases of the self-contained classroom.

This outcome was met.

Units in social studies and science round out the curriculum and can be alternated.

When the writer began to monitor the IEPs, 6 out of 12 were returned to the teachers

Resource program

to check the dates because the IEPs had been dated after the due date. The teachers were

In the resource classroom at the elementary school level students are taught skills in

reminded that all IEPs were updated annually on or before the due date; never after the due

the subjects that are considered weaknesses. They are also taught learning strategies that

date. As the implementation continued, fewer and fewer IEPs were returned to the teachers

will allow them to capitalize on their strengths. At the middle/junior high school level

with incorrect IEP dates.

To analyze the results of the implementation of this training, the IEP monitoring forms were used to check the number of teachers complying each month. The results indicated that the training was successful because the teachers improved each month. Table 1 is a summary of the results of the IEP Monitoring Checklist results.

Table 1

IEP Monitoring Checklist's Results

Months	No. of Teachers in compliance	No. of Teachers not in compliance
1	9	4
2	11	2
3	13	0

Thirteen teachers' IEP dates were checked monthly. The first month 9 out of 13 teachers turned in IEPs on time. The second month 11 out of 13 teachers were in compliance. The third month 13 out of 13 teachers turned in IEPs on time and were in compliance.

2. Teachers will individualize lessons according to the students' needs. Classrooms will be visited monthly by the writer and lesson plans will be checked against the IEPs for at least four students per class randomly chosen. Compliance of 18 out of 20 days will be accepted as a demonstration of success by the writer.

This outcome was met.

The writer visited the 13 classrooms monthly announced and unannounced. The lesson plans were checked for each day of the month for four students per class randomly chosen. At first 4 out of 13 teachers did not know how to write lesson plans using the students' IEP goals and objectives. The writer met with the teachers together and individually showed them how to write lesson plans appropriately for meeting the needs of their children.

During the first month, 52 children's IEPs were checked and 16 out of 52 children's lesson plans were not appropriate to meet their needs. The second month 12 out of 52 children's lesson plans were inappropriate. During the third month 52 out of 52 children's lesson plans were written in accordance to the needs expressed in their IEP goals and objectives.

The writer used a Lesson Plan Checklist to gather data. The writer spot checked 12 students' IEPs weekly, randomly selected. The writer gave feedback to the teachers. The feedback provided teachers with directions on how to use IEPs to write lesson plans. Because of this feedback, teachers would be more conscious of using the goals and objectives from the students' IEPs to write lesson plans that would meet their students' needs. The results of this training proved to be successful. The teachers improved each month. This means a better education for the children.

A survey was given to each teacher concerning the effectiveness of the guidebook. Teachers' feedback on guidebook results is listed in Table 2. The results of this survey indicated that the guidebook was a much needed document. The survey was given to 26

special education teachers and they all returned the completed form. Only one question's results were: 20 out of 26 checked excellent, and 6 of the 26 checked good. The 6 identified themselves as very seasoned teachers and wouldn't necessarily need to refer to the guidebook often.

The teachers were also given the self-review checklist to monitor themselves (see Appendix B). They reported to the writer that this document was very helpful. It helped them to do a better job writing the students' IEPs.

Table 2

Teachers' Feedback on Guidebook Results

Questions		No Excellent	No Good	No Fair	No Poor
1.	Was it written in a clear and understandable style?	26	0	0	0
2.	Was the book useful?	26	0	0	0
3.	Will you refer to it as a guide?	20	6	0	0
4.	Will you recommend it to someone else?	26	0	0	0
5.	Additional Comments!	0	0	0	0

Discussion

Teachers have been expected to exhibit performance upon graduation from teacher

education programs, solo fashion in their first days and weeks in the classroom. Teachers, teacher trainers, educational theoreticians and researchers alike agree that the first year experience is indeed a difficult and often personally and professionally threatening one for most teachers (Grant & Zeichner, 1981). This is particularly true for teachers in special education who are often greeted by ill-equipped classrooms, a scarcity of essential supplies with which to meet the special needs of their students who are likely to differ widely in ability. They are also faced with more students than they can reasonably serve in the limited time frame, and an overwhelming amount of paperwork (Weiskopf, 1980).

Weber (1987) emphasizes the need of teachers for role models upon entering the profession and describes how well this coincides with the need of experienced teachers to nurture and help develop the novice teacher. It is generally agreed that beginning teachers do reasonably need specific help, especially with classroom management, maintaining discipline, writing lesson plans, and delivering effective lessons (Insley, 1987). Teachers who worked with mentors in the California Mentor Teaching Program (King, 1988) reported feeling more positive about themselves and about their teaching.

The writer instituted a mentoring program for newly hired special education teachers in each school of the district. It is a program that is deemed helpful and has been needed for a long time. The mentoring program is giving the teachers a support system that they have never had before. It reduces frustration when the teachers can share their problems and/or get suggestions from someone at their school.

The inservice training and technical assistance given by the writer to first year, uncertified, and working out of their area of certification teachers focused on the following

goals: (a) developing strategies to analyze and solve teaching dilemmas thereby enhancing their own self-confidence through a better understanding of the realities of the classroom, (b) developing an awareness of the individual needs of all students, especially those who do not thrive in existing programs, (c) developing an understanding of what it means to be a professional teacher, (d) developing an understanding of the major roles related to teaching and a commitment to these roles and to the profession, (e) developing an understanding that existing knowledge does not fit every situation and that every problem does not have a single "correct" answer, (f) developing important teaching skills through opportunities to practice and receive feedback, (g) developing a routine to adapt learning experiences to meet special learning needs of their students paying particular attention to students' prior knowledge and learning styles.

The inservice training and technical assistance also dealt with helping these teachers to write appropriate Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) for their students meeting designated timelines, and on how to use the IEPs to write lesson plans to meet the students' individual needs.

An IEP describes the special education and related services specifically designed to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability. The program is developed at one or more IEP meetings, and its provisions are detailed in writing in the IEP.

The IEP is developed by a committee that includes at least a school administrator, the student's teachers, special and regular, the parents, and the student when appropriate. It contains goals and objectives based upon the student's present level of educational performance. These goals and objectives are outlined by those involved in planning and

providing services. In addition, the IEP specifies the educational placement or setting, and the related services necessary to reach these goals and objectives. It also includes the date the services will begin, how long they will last, and the way in which student progress will be evaluated.

The IEP can be more than an outline and management tool of the student's special education program. It can be an opportunity for parents and educators to work together as equal participants to identify the student's needs, what will be provided to meet those needs, and what the anticipated outcomes may be. It is a document that is revised as the needs of the student change. The IEP is a commitment in writing of the resources the school agrees to provide. Also, the periodic review of the IEP serves as an evaluation of the student's progress toward meeting the educational goals and objectives. Finally, the IEP serves as the focal point for clarifying issues and cooperative decision making by parents, the student and school personnel for the best interest of the student. For all these reasons, the IEP is the cornerstone of special education and special education teachers must know how to write them.

The teachers were informed that the IEP must be developed for each student with a disability within 30 calendar days after eligibility determination. The IEP must be developed before actual placement, and initiation of special education and related services. No special education and related services can be provided prior to the development of the IEP. Finally, all IEPs must be reviewed at least annually by the IEP committee. A parent or a teacher may request reviews of the IEP more frequently. Parents/legal guardian or surrogate parents must receive prior notification in writing of each IEP meeting. This notice must contain the

purpose of the meeting, the time, the date, the location of the meeting, and who will be in attendance.

The writer pointed out to the teachers that when developing lesson plans for special education students, the first thing one must keep in mind is to follow the IEP for each student. Although teachers often feel pressure to follow the Course of Study for their district, following the IEP is extremely important. On the IEPs, goals will be listed that need addressing and should be incorporated into the daily lesson plans.

As a result of the training, the new special education teachers are holding IEP meetings within the time lines, and turning the IEPs into the special education office in a timely manner. The teachers are individualizing lessons according to the students' needs. The writer had been providing and will continue to provide technical assistance. The teachers are constantly calling the writer for assistance, especially with the IEP writing. The district is now in compliance and did not lose any state or federal funding.

Recommendations

The writer had several recommendations based on the results of this practicum. First, inservice training should be held at the beginning of each year to inform new teachers of the special education department's expectations, the state and federal guidelines, to give needed assistance, and give these teachers a chance to ask questions. Meetings should be scheduled throughout the year to keep the teachers abreast of changes, to give the teachers a chance to ask questions and to brainstorm among themselves. A district should not wait until it's out of compliance before intervening in this process. Second, classrooms should continued to be visited randomly to check lesson plans so that teachers will not become complacent. The

bottom line is to do whatever is best to make a difference in children's lives. Third, Lanser data should be pulled monthly to check IEP dates and notifications sent to each special education teacher as a reminder to keep up with updates. Fourth, the IEP Facilitator should send out parent notifications scheduling meetings for all initial students to ensure student placement within the 30-day time line. Fifth, a guidebook is a valuable tool for the new special education teachers and should be available and updated as needed.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum will be shared in the following way. The practicum and its results will be submitted to the Regional Director of Region VI, the Supervisor of Special Education, the writer's immediate supervisor, and the special education teachers that participated in the training.

The writer networked with other local school districts on the effectiveness of this training program and shared the strategies that were implemented within the writer's school district. The writer plans to present at the annual Special Education Superconference this year.

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Appendix A

IEP Monitoring Checklist

IEP MONITORING CHECKLIST

All IEPs are monitored by the Special Education Office. This checklist provides the reviewer's responses and comments for the teacher's reference and/or corrections. If you have any questions, please contact the IEP Facilitator at _____.

Code for responses: S = Satisfactory; N = Needs Attention (see comments); NA = Not applicable

Teacher: _____

Student: _____

School: _____

IEP Date: _____

Date at Office: _____

Date Due: _____

Type IEP:

- ___ Initial
- ___ Review
- ___ Transitional
- ___ Interim

PROGRAM/SERVICE PAGE:

- System ..... S N
- Name/DOB/ID# ..... S N
- Meeting Date ..... S N
- Evaluation Date ..... S N
- Exceptionality ..... S N
- Second Exceptionality ..... NA S N
- School(s) ..... S N
- Grade ..... S N
- Type IEP/Correct ..... S N

Signatures:

- SPED Teacher(s) ..... S N
- RegEd Teacher(s) ..... NA S N
- Parent ..... S N
- ODR ..... S N
- PAS Representative ..... NA S N
- Other(s) ..... NA S N
- Long Term Goal ..... S N
- LEAP Results ..... S N
- Testing Modifications ..... NA S N
- Regular Classes ..... NA S N
- Class Modifications ..... NA S N
- Activities with Peers ..... S N
- Extended School Year ..... S N
- Length of Instruction
- Special Class Instruction ..... S N
- Direct Services
- Speech Therapy ..... NA S N
- Adaptive P.E. ..... NA S N
- Related Services
- Speech Therapy ..... NA S N
- Occupational Therapy ..... NA S N
- Physical Therapy ..... NA S N
- Special Transportation ..... NA S N

White - Central Office

PLACEMENT/LRE PAGE:

- System ..... S N
- Name/DOB/ID# ..... S N
- Meeting Date ..... S N
- Appropriate Setting ..... S N

_____

- LRE Justification ..... S N

_____

- Special Ed. Service Model ..... S N
- Six Weeks Progress Report ..... S N
- Date/ODR Signature ..... S N
- Parent Decisions
- Date/ODR Signature ..... S N
- Appropriate Decisions ..... S N
- Student Signature(18+) ..... NA S N
- Site Determination ..... S N

_____

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN PAGE(S):

- System ..... S N
- Name/DOB/ID# ..... S N
- Meeting Date ..... S N
- Page Numbered ..... S N
- General Information ..... S N

_____

- Special Curriculum Needs ..... S N

_____

- Curriculum Need Area ..... S N

_____

- Current Performance ..... S N

_____

_____

_____

- Annual Goals
- Match curriculum area ..... S N
- Measurable ..... S N
- Method of Measurement ..... S N

_____

- Short -term Objectives:
- Condition given ..... S N

_____

- Behavior Measurable ..... S N

_____

- Degree of Proficiency ..... S N

_____

- Method of Measurement ..... S N

_____

Yellow - Teacher

- Related to Goal ..... S N

_____

- Numbered ..... S N

_____

- Student Appropriate ..... S N

_____

- Personnel Responsible ..... S N
- Completed and Signed ..... S N

_____

_____

The Status of this IEP is:

- ___ Great, keep up the good work.
- ___ Note minor corrections. These are to be made on your copy.
- ___ Note suggestions given for future IEPs.
- ___ Make corrections and return IEP (in person) to IEP Facilitator by _____.

File this checklist in your classroom under "Local Monitoring."

_____

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

A Checklist for Self-Review

A CHECKLIST FOR SELF-REVIEW

TAKE ONE STUDENT'S IEP FOLDER (including IEP, data collection/student performance records, and progress reports) AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY.

Answer the questions below using the following directions:

Circle "Y" for Yes, "N" for No "?" If uncertain. (NA for not applicable or not appropriate.)

For each "N" or "?", put a √ in the circle in front of the item, then write notes to tell what is missing or how you would make corrections.

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

1 Read the **General Student Information** section. For each item below, ask the question, "Does the student's **General Student Information** section include"

○ a student's educationally related strengths? Y N ?

_____

_____

○ b student's educationally related weaknesses? Y N ?

_____

_____

○ c (for review IEPs) a review of the student's progress or lack of progress in

1) special education? Y N ? NA

_____

2) regular/general education (if applicable)? Y N ? NA

3) related service(s) (if applicable)? Y N ? NA

○ d information on how student's learning needs are being addressed? Y N ? NA

_____

○ e information on the student's transition needs, (if applicable)? Y N ? NA

○ f If appropriate, does the student's General Student Information section include–

1) curricular adaptations/modifications needed in special education/general education? Y N ? NA

2) instructional methods? Y N ? NA

3) specialized equipment?

4) special media/materials? Y N ? NA

5) social/emotional needs? Y N ? NA

6) health needs/alerts? Y N ? NA

7) family needs (for preschool students)? Y N ? NA

Write any additional notes to yourself here:

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM NEED AREAS

2 Take a minute or two and reread the **General Student Information**. Based on information obtained from **General Student Information**, answer the following questions–

○ a Are all special education curriculum need areas applicable to the student checked? Y N ?

If more areas are checked than should have been, based on information in **General Student Information,** make a note here - i.e., do you need to add pertinent information

to the General Student Information?

_____

○ b. Are each of the special education curriculum need areas written in the **Curriculum Need Area** blanks? Y N ?

_____

If the specific curriculum areas (e g , reading, grooming, etc) Are indicated rather than **Curriculum Need Areas,** make a note here - to indicate the appropriate **Curriculum Need Area** (e g , Cognitive/Academic, Sel-Help, etc)

_____

Write any additional notes to yourself here

SPECIFIC CURRENT PERFORMANCE

Choose **ONE** curriculum need area and write it on the blank below -

CURRICULUM NEED AREA: _____

3 Read the **Specific Current Performance** section for the **Curriculum Need Area** listed above, then answer the following questions-

○ a. Is the specific current performance section completed for the curriculum need area (is there something written here)?
Y N ?

_____

○ b. Does the specific current performance section relate to the **Curriculum Need Area?** Y N ?

○ c. Does it include a description of how the student performs? (Remember that **Specific Current Performance** is to include more than just grade/age levels or test scores) Y N ?

Write any additional notes to yourself here:

ANNUAL GOALS

4. For the **Curriculum Need Area** identified above, read the **Annual Goal** section and answer the following questions

○ a. Is there an annual goal for the curriculum need area? Y N ?

○ b. Does the annual goal **relate** to the current performance? Y N ?

○ c. Is the annual goal measurable? (Can you determine where the student is beginning the annual special educational program and the point at which s/he will be the end of the year's program?) Y N ?

_____

○ d Is a method of measuring whether the student has achieved the annual goal included? Y N ?

_____

○ e Does the method of measurement make sense/match the student behavior expected? Y N ?

_____

○ f Can the student accomplish this goal in 1 year? Y N ?

_____

Write any additional notes to yourself here:

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

For the **Annual Goal** examined above, write one of the **Short Term Objectives** on the lines below:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5 Carefully read the **short term objective** above and answer the following questions:

○ a What is the behavior?

_____

1) Is it observable? Y N ?

_____

2) Is it measurable? Y N ?

3) Is it verifiable? Y N ?

○ b Are there special conditions, such as cues or prompts or environment (situation)? Y N ? NA

○ c Is there a criterion (evaluative) for the student to perform the behavior? Y N ?

Does it make sense (does it match the behavior)? Y N ?

○ d Is there a terminal point of review or minimum standard of performance (the point at which the student has achieved or shown mastery of the objective's skill)? Y N ?

○ e Is there a method of measuring the student's performance on the behavior (either the same or different from that used in the Annual Goal)? Y N ?

Does it make sense? Y N ?

Write any additional notes to yourself here:

DATA COLLECTION

6 Look at your data collection system for the **short term objective** written above and answer the following questions

○ a How often am I collecting data?

Often enough? Y N ?

Too much? Y N ?_____

○ b What is my method? (Check the one(s) that applies)

___ 1) Is it a YES-NO, + - system?

___ 2) Is it based on prompt levels?

___ 3) Is it skill analyzed (to identify colors, each color is tested?

___ 4) Is it task analyzed (to toilet, each step is identified)?

___ 5) Is it pencil and paper (addition facts, comprehension questions, creative writing)?

___ 6) Other _____

Does the data collection system make sense? Y N ?

_____

○ c How are the data summarized?

___ 1) percent?

___ 2) duration, time (seconds, minutes)?

___ 3) prompt level, independence level?

___ 4) number of times/trials/steps?

___ 5) distance (feet, yards)?

___ 6) grades?

___ 7) other_____

Does the method of summarizing the data make sense? Y N ?

_____

○ d Is my data collection method clear (is there a code for marks, do the marks match the code, etc)? Y N ?

_____

Write any additional notes to yourself here

Compare the **Short Term Objective** to data collection system and answer the following questions:

○ e. Is the behavior/skill on which data have been collected the same as the behavior/skill written in the IEP objective? Y N ?

_____

○ f. Does the data collection recording method match the IEP objective (conditions, evaluative criterion)? Y N ?

_____

1) Do the data indicate progress or performance of the behavior by the student? Y N ?

_____

2) Has the terminal point of review or mastery point been achieved? Y N ?

_____

3) Does it appear that the student will achieve this objective in a year (or time expected)? Y N ?

_____

○ g. Does my data collection method make sense for the objective? Y N ?

_____

Write any additional notes to yourself here

REPORTING PROGRESS

7. Look at the student's progress report. Ask yourself, "If I received this report, would I know how the student performed for the last 4, 6, or 9 weeks?" From the progress report, answer the following questions

○ a. Does the progress report include information on whether the student is making progress or is failing to make progress? Y N ?

_____

○ b. Does the progress report give specific information related to the objective and the student's performance? Y N ?

_____

○ c. Does the progress report indicate what all codes mean? Y N ?

_____

○ d. Does the progress report have space for comments? Y N ?

_____

Does the progress report make sense? Y N ?

_____

○ e. Are the dates that objectives were achieved written next to the objective on the student's **Instructional Plan** page(s) of the IEP? Y N ? NA

_____

○ f. Are the dates that annual goals were achieved written next to the Method of Measurement under the Annual Goal on the student's **Instructional Plan** page(s) of the IEP? Y N ? NA

_____

Write any notes to yourself here

Appendix C

Lesson Plan Checklist

Lesson Plan Checklist

Teacher's Name_____ **School's Name**_____**Month**_____

_____ **= compliance - = noncompliance**

TASKS	DATES
1. IEP objectives identified	
2. Modifications appropriate for	
students' needs	
3. Lessons age appropriate	
4. Learning styles taken into	
consideration	

Appendix D

Teachers' Feedback on Guidebook

Teachers' Feedback on Guidebook

The writer would sincerely appreciate your suggestions for improving this book. Please respond by checking excellent, good, fair, or poor to the following questions and return this form to the Special Education Office. Thank you.

Please tell your overall impression of the book.

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	Was it written in a clear and understandable style?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2	Was the book useful?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3	Will you refer to it as a guide?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4	Will you recommend it to someone else?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5	Additional Comments!				

Appendix E

The Inservice Agenda

I.E.P. Inservice

I.E.P.s '98 – Special Education 2000

AGENDA

A. Overview - "In General"

Looking at the entire document for "what is new" and "what is not" in general and overall

B. Concepts - Philosophies, Attitude Adjustments

- Some "thinking processes" we have to shift
- Looking at some old things in new ways
- The "why"
- New responsibilities of IEP teams

C. Page by Page Instruction

- Indepth - Up Close
- The **how**, **what**, **who** and **when**

D. Examples/Samples

Appendix F

The Guidebook

GUIDEBOOK

for

New Special Education Teachers

Public School System

Special Education Department

Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Supervisor:

Prepared by:

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Preface

Welcome to the Special Education Department of the School System. During the start of your journey into teaching, we would like to help as much as possible to make it an enjoyable experience. For that reason, we have prepared this guidebook, hoping it will answer some of your questions and give you the appropriate people to call when you can't find the answers.

In some of the schools, the special education department chairperson will be able to provide you with technical assistance on various issues. In addition, the principal may want to suggest a fellow faculty member as a mentor to help you get oriented. In any event, always seek advice from other special education teachers if you are unsure of a situation. This guidebook lists the various persons' responsible for programs within our department. Feel free to call one of them if you need help.

Good luck as you begin a wonderful, exciting and rewarding educational journey.

Ferriday Education Center

Listing of Staff

Philosophy

The Special Education Department of the School Board adheres to the belief that all children are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). A child with disabilities is no less entitled to the same rights and privileges.

To assure children with disabilities an appropriate education requires unique program planning, teaching methods and techniques, regular and special classes, materials, equipment, and above all, a commitment to meet his/her unique needs. To accomplish this, the child with disabilities needs to be in a flexible environment which allows for full opportunity for participation in the mainstream of school activity.

A plan for return to regular education and, when feasible, exit from special education should be made for each student with mild disabilities. We believe that these students can be taught skills that will allow them to function successfully in the regular education setting.

Students in the Public School System are referred and evaluated in strict compliance with the mandates of **Bulletin 1508, the Pupil Appraisal Handbook.** We strongly adhere to the stated philosophy in **Bulletin 1508** that...

> "while a majority of students referred for pupil appraisal services may be suspected of being exceptional and in need of special education and related services, pupil appraisal personnel are not limited to providing services solely to this population. Many students experiencing learning problems can be helped through pupil appraisal services in the regular classroom, enabling the student to benefit from the regular instructional program and eliminating the need for special education. A major goal of pupil appraisal personnel is to be a child advocate and to assist students to remain in and profit from the regular educational program whenever possible. When a student needs special education, pupil appraisal personnel should assist the teachers and parents of the student to provide an appropriate special education program."

The final determination as to whether or not a student is exceptional and the extent of special educational and related services is based upon a complete, comprehensive evaluation of that student. This also includes Limited English Proficient (LEP) students suspected of having a disability.

Infant and Toddler (ages 0-2 years) which include screening, evaluation and family service coordination are available. Preschool children (ages 3-5 years) are offered screening and evaluation services and, if eligible, are provided non-categorical preschool programming.

Each child is viewed as a unique individual, and the goal of the Special Education Department is to provide an instructional program which will minimize his/her disability and maximize learning opportunities. The purpose of the program is to provide individualized instruction to meet the needs of each eligible student ages 3 through 21 and to develop academic, social/emotional, and vocational skills. Teaching equipment and supplies are available in abundance in order to individualize the program in an effort to

meet each student's unique needs. Throughout schools within the Public School System, students may receive specialized services through these program for:

Autism	Multiple Disabled
Behavior Disordered	Other Health Impaired
Hospital/Homebound	Orthopedically Disabled
Learning Disabled	Non-Categorical Preschool
Mild Mentally Disabled	Severe Language Disordered
Moderate Mentally Disabled	Visually Impaired
Severely/Profoundly Disabled	Gifted
Traumatic Brain Injured	

Instructional and related services which are available to eligible students in order for them to benefit from special education programs include:

Adapted Physical Education

Occupational Therapy

Physical Therapy

Speech Pathology

Social Work Services

Counseling

Bulletins

Regarding Special Education

741 Handbook for School Administrators

746 Standards for State Certification of School Personnel

1508 Pupil Appraisal Handbook

1530 The IEP Handbook

1575 Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy in Schools

1706 Regulations for Implementation of the Exceptional Children's Act

1870/1871 Extended School Year Services

1879 Related Services in the Educational Setting, Guidelines for IEP Committees

1885 Clean Intermittent Catheterization in the Educational Setting, Guidelines for Implementation of Act 1048

1886 Special Education Transportation Guide

Exceptionality Classification Table

Code	Code Initials	Categories
01	Aut	Autism
02	VIB	Visually Impaired (Blind)
03	HID	Hearing Impaired (Deaf)
04	DB	Deaf-Blindness
05	E/BD	Emotionally Behavioral Disordered
08	HI	Hearing Impairments (Hard of Hearing)
09	HP/HB	Hospital Homebound
10	ITD	Infant & Toddlers with Disabilities
11	LD	Learning Disabilities
12	MiMD	Mildly Mental Disabilities
13	MoMD	Moderately Mental Disabilities
14	SMD	Severe Mental Disabilities
15	PMD	Profound Mental Disabilities
16	MultiD	Multiple Disabilities
17	Noncat	Non-categorical Preschool
18	OH	Orthopedical Impairments
19	OHI	Other Health Impaired
20	VI	Visual Impairments (Partially Seeing)
21	SLD	Severe Language Disorders
22	EH/SL	Educational Handicapped/Slow Learner
24	NEDA	No Exceptionality
25	TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
27	G	Gifted
28	SIA	Speech Impairment (Articulation)
29	SIF	Speech Impairment (Fluency)
30	SIL	Speech Impairment (Language)
31	SIV	Speech Impairment (Voice)
32	TM	Talented - Music
33	TT	Talented - Theater
34	TVA	Talented - Visual Arts
99	NEIAB	No Exceptionality - inability to complete

Classification and Definitions

Autism

Deaf - Blindness

Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Hearing Impairments

Learning Disabilities

Mental Disabilities

Multiple Disabilities

Non-categorical Preschool

Orthopedic Impairments

Other Health Impairments

Severe Language Disorders

Speech Impairments

Traumatic Brain Injury

Visual Impairments

Direct and Related Services

- Adapted Physical Education
- Health Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Counseling

Autism

Definition

Autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The essential features include:

1. Disturbance of developmental rates and sequences: Normal coordination of the three developmental pathways (motor, social-adaptive, cognitive) is disrupted. Delays, arrests, and/or regressions occur among or within one or more of the pathways.
2. Disturbances of responses to sensory stimuli: There may be generalized hyper-reactivity or hypo-reactivity, and/or alternation of these two states over periods ranging from hours to months.
3. Disturbances of speech, language-cognitive, and nonverbal communication .
4. Disturbance of the capacity to relate appropriately to people, events, or objects: There is failure to develop appropriate responses to people and to assign appropriate symbolic meaning to objects or events.
5. Associated features: Associate features vary with age and include other disturbances of thought, mood, and behavior. Mood may be labile: crying may be unexplained or inconsolable; there may be giggling or laughing without identifiable stimuli. There may be a lack of appreciation of real dangers such as moving vehicles as well as inappropriate fears. Self-injurious behaviors, such as hair pulling and hitting or biting parts of the

body, may be present. Stereotypic and repetitive movements of limbs or the entire body are common.

Classroom Design

Depending on the type of programming used in the classroom, class design will vary. Students in pre-school and elementary programs benefit from individual or small group instruction, with areas designated for specific learning activities. The classroom may include such areas appropriate to teach cognitive, social, family, and community related skills. Learning activities in the community are also recommended. Junior and senior high school students benefit from classrooms designed to teach vocational skills. Use of work areas for teaching cooking, grooming, and other functional living skills activities are also appropriate. Many activities occur in the natural environment in which they occur, (e.g., laundry, grocery, post office, restaurant, bank, library, etc.).

Deaf-Blindness

Definition

Deaf-Blindness is concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that such students require specific special education services to meet the needs resulting from both impairments.

Criteria for Eligibility

Evidence of A, B, and C is required.

A. Vision Impairment - any of the following:

1. Measured corrected visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the better eye, and/or a previous chronic condition has existed which has interfered, is interfering, or will interfere with the visual learning mode.
2. Cortical blindness in the presence of normal ocular structure as verified in the report of an ophthalmologist, pediatrician, or pediatric neurologist.
3. Field of vision which subtends an angle of 20 degrees or less in the better eye.
4. Other blindness resulting from an active disease process.

B. Hearing Impairment

Sensorineural hearing loss of 30 decibels (ANSI) or more across the speech frequencies in the better ear with amplification and/or a previous chronic condition that has existed which has interfered, is interfering, or will interfere

with the auditory learning mode.

C. Educational Need

Educational determination that the student's combined vision and hearing impairments are such that he cannot be served appropriately by the special education program for either visual impairments or hearing impairments.

Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Definition

The term emotional or behavioral disorder means a disability characterized by behavioral or emotional responses so different from appropriate age, cultural, or ethnic norms that they adversely affect performance. Performance includes academic, social, vocational or personal skills. Such a disability is more than a temporary, expected response to stressful events in the environment; is consistently exhibited in two different settings; and persists despite individualized intervention within general education and other settings. Emotional and behavioral disorders can co-exist with other disabilities.

This category may include children or youth who:

1. Exhibit seriously impaired contact with reality, and severely impaired social, academic, and self-care functioning, whose thinking is frequently confused, whose behavior may be grossly inappropriate and bizarre, and whose emotional reactions are frequently inappropriate to the situation.

or

2. Manifest long-term patterns of inappropriate behaviors, which may include but are not limited to: aggressiveness anti-social acts, refusal to accept adult inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsiveness.

or

3. Experience serious discomfort from anxiety, depression, or irrational fears and concerns whose symptoms may include but are not limited to: serious eating and/or sleeping disturbances, extreme sadness, suicidal ideation,

persistent refusal to attend school or excessive avoidance of unfamiliar people, maladaptive dependence on parents, or non-organic failure to thrive.

or

4. Have a Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - Revised (DSM-III-R) diagnosis indicating a severe mental disorder, which requires 2- hour care and supervision, such as, but not limited to: Psychosis, Schizophrenia, Major Affective Disorders, Reactive Attachment Disorder of Infancy or Early Childhood (non-organic failure to thrive), or Severe Conduct Disorder.

This classification does not include:

Children/youth who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they also meet the criteria for Emotional/Behavior Disorders.

Classroom design

The physical space should provide for individual as well as group instruction. If there is room, at least two learning centers should be set up. One of the learning centers could be designated as a time out center.

Students who are mildly impaired may be successful in a resource setting rather than a self-contained setting.

Within a self-contained Behavior Disordered setting, a student may be mainstreamed for a maximum of two hours a day or may spend 100% of the time in the self-contained setting. If behavior problems are occurring in unstructured settings such as recess, cafeteria, bus line, etc., the teacher must control and program for these variables within the self-

contained setting.

Academic curriculum

The student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will determine the type of instructional program:

1. **Specially Designed Regular Instruction**, addressing State Minimum Standards, uses the Special Education Core Curriculum. This curriculum is a basic list of competencies that students should master before moving to the next grade level curriculum. When a student has developed proficiency with the skills listed at a grade level, he/she will have the necessary requisites to function successfully at the next grade level. Textbooks for regular education are used with additional instructional materials designed for the learning disabled student.

2. **Alternative to Regular Placement Program** - addressing Minimum Standards for Mildly Disabling Conditions.

3. **Affective (Social) Curriculum:**

   Each student whose primary impairment is identified as Behavior Disordered must have social goals and objectives addressed in the student's IEP as a major curriculum area. Teaching strategies to achieve the behavioral goals and objectives will be based on the individual students needs. Social Curriculum involves a wide variety of techniques and materials. Establishing baseline data, positive reinforcement, parent communication, assertive discipline, are but a few examples used in behavioral programming.

4. **The Tri-Level Behavior Management Plan**

This is a specific behavior management plan that will be in the pilot stage for new teachers beginning the 1997-98 school year. Teachers will be trained in September using the plan. Experienced teachers who volunteer may use the plan after they have participated in the training. The plan consists of the following components:

- A system of positive reinforcement
- Using class rules
- An Assertive Discipline plan
- A Tri-Level management plan
- Systematic documentation
- Parent/student orientation

Discipline: As part of the Exceptional Children's Act, State of Louisiana, Section 459:

> "Prior to a cessation (suspension, expulsion) of or interference with the educational program, school professionals must give consideration to the influence that the student disability may have on the behavior in question. Thus it becomes imperative that teachers of BD students develop a specific management plan to address suspendable behaviors and include the plan in the IEP."

On behaviors that pose an immediate danger to self or others, or is significantly destructive to property, the student may immediately be removed from school provided that a determination be carried out.

Hearing Impairments

A student with hearing impairments is one whose auditory sensitivity (as measured by conventional behavioral audiological techniques or physiological measures, i.e., Auditory Brain Stem Response, etc.) is so deficient as to significantly interfere with educational performance. It includes students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or who have Unilateral Hearing Loss or High Frequency Hearing Loss.

1. Deafness is a permanent hearing loss with an unaided pure tone average of 70 dB (ANSI) or more in the better ear at 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz. The hearing loss is so severe as to significantly limit the use of the auditory channel for processing linguistic information, with or without amplification.
2. Hard of Hearing:
   (a) Permanent or fluctuating hearing loss, with an unaided pure tone average in the better ear at 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz between 25 and 70 dB (ANSI). The hearing loss is severe enough to be considered educationally significant as it will to varying degrees impact the normal development of speech and language skills and/or interfere with learning new information through the auditory channel.
   (b) Unilateral Hearing Loss is a permanent hearing loss with an unaided pure tone average in the poorer ear at 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz of 40 Db (ANSI) or greater. The hearing in the better ear is within the normal range (pure tone average of 20 dB or better at 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz). The hearing loss in the poorer ear is of sufficient severity

to be considered educationally significant because it may affect the person's ability to process linguistic information, particularly in the presence of background noise.

(c) High Frequency Hearing Loss is a bilateral hearing loss with an unaided pure tone average of 40 dB or greater at any two of the following frequencies (2000, 3000, 4000 or 6000 Hz). The hearing loss is educationally significant because it is of sufficient severity to impact the person's ability to process linguistic information, particularly in the presence of background noise.

Amplification

All students should use either personal or classroom amplification during school hours, unless contraindicated by an audiologist's or otolaryngologist's recommendation. Use of a personal amplification system should be encouraged outside of the school setting. Concordia Parish Public School System provides a classroom amplification system which is the responsibility of the individual teacher.

Recognizing the importance of auditory training as an integral part of the hearing impaired student's curriculum, is the teacher's responsibility, in compliance with the student's IEP, to ensure that amplification best suited to the student is employed. At this point, it is possible to proceed with the direct service of educating the students.

Classroom design

A variety of instructional settings should be used in classrooms for the hearing impaired student. Small group instruction for introduction of new concepts and to provide

for development of problem solving techniques; individualized learning centers for specific skill practice; experiential learning to promote the expansion of language structures can be used.

The physical setting should include adaptations to ensure a good signal-to-noise ratio. Examples are: carpeting, distance from noisy areas, minimum of auditory reverberation. An alternate fire alarm system is also recommended to allow students to respond to an emergency situation promptly.

Special Education placement options include: Self-contained, Resource/Itinerant Resource.

Total Communication is a philosophy which implies acceptance and use of all methods of communication to assist the student with a hearing impairment in acquiring language and understanding.

Consideration for placement in the Aural/Oral Track will address each student's individual needs as follows:

1. Residual Hearing (Functional use of Residual Hearing)
2. Appropriate use of Amplification
3. Preferential use of Expressive & Receptive Language through the use of Auditory/Oral Channels
4. Intelligible Speech to include Receptive and Expressive Language Skills
5. Potential for the Development of Oral Communication Skills
6. Speech and Language learned primarily through Auditory Channel
7. Recommendation of IEP committee members

8. Continued Placement in this track to be based on Progress noted Academic, Social-Emotional and Communication Areas

Curriculum

The student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will determine the type of instructional program:

1. **Specially Designed Regular Instructional Program** - addressing State Minimum Standards - uses textbooks, pacing charts, etc., for regular education with additional instructional materials designed for the hearing impaired used for supplement work.
2. **Alternative to Regular Placement Program** - addressing separate minimum standards either for mildly disabling conditions, or moderate, severe, or profoundly disabling conditions.
3. **Combination of the Above**

Another component of the IEP committee decision is to determine the appropriate primary communication mode for instructional purposes, such as auditory/oral, speech reading, signing systems, written language, etc.

While recognizing that all instruction falls within the philosophy of total communication, the instruction mode for some students will be primarily auditory/oral, while others will be primarily auditory/simultaneous, where a sign language component may be added.

Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities mean severe and unique learning problems as a result of significant difficulties in the acquisition, organization, or expression of specific academic skills or concepts. These learning problems are typically manifested in school functioning as significantly poor performance in such areas as reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic reasoning or calculation, oral expression or comprehension, or the acquisition of basic concepts. The term includes such conditions as attention deficit, perceptual handicaps, process disorders, minimal brain dysfunction, brain injury, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, or sensory-motor dysfunction, when consistent with these criteria. The term does not include students who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor impairments, mental disabilities, a behavior disorder, environmental deprivation, cultural difference or economic disadvantage.

Criteria for eligibility

Criteria 1 through 4 must all be met.

1. The learning problems are not due primarily to such factors as:
   - (a) lack of educational opportunity,
   - (b) emotional stress in the home or school,
   - (c) difficulty adjusting to school,
   - (d) curricular change or temporary crisis situations,
   - (e) other disabling conditions,
   - (f) environmental deprivation or economic disadvantage,

(g) cultural differences, and/or

(h) lack of motivation.

2. There must be evidence that the student, after receiving supportive and remedial regular educational assistance, still exhibits a learning disability consistent with the definition.

3. There must be evidence that the student, after receiving intervention services specific to the identified learning problems, exhibits a learning disability consistent with the definition.

4. There must be evidence of a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability as demonstrated by a difference of at least one standard deviation between the student's strongest and weakest performance in academic areas described as follows:

(a) A relative academic strength as demonstrated by performance no more than one standard deviation below the mean in grades 3 through 12 or one-half standard deviation below the mean in grades K through 2 for the grade level appropriate for the child's chronological age in one or more of the areas listed under 2 below. The relative academic strength must in addition be at least one standard deviation higher than the lowest academic area identified in 2 below.

(b) An academic deficit or deficits, as demonstrated by performance greater than one and one-half standard deviations below the mean in grades K through 2, or two standard deviations below the mean in

grades 3 through 12 for the grade level appropriate for the student's chronological age in one or more of the following areas:

1. Reading recognition
2. Reading comprehension
3. Math calculations
4. Math reasoning
5. Oral expression
6. Listening comprehension
7. Written expression
8. Other age-appropriate developmental skill areas when more appropriate for kindergarten students

Classroom design

A wide variety of instructional settings should be used in classrooms for the learning disabled student. Small group instruction, individual learning centers and individualized activities to provide for the development of problem solving techniques are deemed appropriate.

Reading and math skills are the primary emphases of the self-contained classroom. Units in social studies and science round out the curriculum and can be alternated.

Resource program

In the resource classroom at the elementary school level students are taught skills in the subjects that are considered weaknesses. They are also taught learning strategies that will allow them to capitalize on their strengths. At the middle/junior high school level

students are taught skills to remediate weaknesses. Reading in the content area is taught one fourth (1/4) of scheduled class time at the high school. The remainder of class time is used to tutor students in their other academic areas. Students are assisted with study and test taking skills as well. High school students may only receive one reading resource Carnegie credit per semester, although they may attend a second resource period for no credit.

Other Carnegie credits may be given by certified high school special education teachers upon three conditions:

1. All regular state course requirements are met
2. Principal approval
3. Teacher is certified in appropriate subject matter.

Resource teachers are to serve as consulting teachers. Responsibilities of the consulting teacher include the documented tracking of resource student's progress within the regular classes. It also includes assisting and working with the regular teacher in attempting to ease the student into the regular education curriculum.

Curriculum

The student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will determine the type of instructional program:

1. **Specially Designed Regular Instruction**, addressing State Minimum Standards, uses the Special Education Core Curriculum. This curriculum is basic list of competencies that students should master before moving to the next grade level curriculum. When a student has developed proficiency with

the skills listed at a grade level, he/she will have the necessary requisites to function successfully at the next grade level. Textbooks for regular education are used with additional instructional materials designed for the learning disabled student.

2. **Alternative to Regular Placement Program** - addressing Minimum Standards for Mildly Handicapping Conditions.

Mental Disabilities

Definition

Mental disabilities means significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period.

In every case determinations of a mental disability shall be based on an assessment of a variety of factors including educational functioning, adaptive behavior, and past and current developmental activities (e.g., indices of social, intellectual, adaptive, verbal, motor, language, emotional, and self-care development for age).

1. Students with **Mild Mental Disabilities** are mildly impaired in intellectual, academic, and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a student with a mild mental disability generally falls between two and three standards deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations and generally within the same deviation as the intellectual functioning.
2. Students with **Moderate Mental Disabilities** are moderately impaired in intellectual, academic, and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a student with a moderate mental disability generally falls between three and four standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations and generally within the same deviation

as the intellectual functioning.

3. Students with **Severe Mental Disabilities** are severely impaired in intellectual, academic, and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a student with a severe mental disability generally falls between four and five standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations and generally within the same deviation as the intellectual functioning.

4. Students with **Profound Mental Disabilities** are profoundly impaired in intellectual, academic, and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rare of learning. The measured intelligence of a student with a profound mental disability generally falls below five standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations, generally within the same deviation as the intellectual functioning.

Instructional setting

Classes for the mild mentally handicapped should be located on regular campuses of appropriate age levels. It is recommended that when possible there exist at least two classes on a school site to accommodate the academic levels and the three year age span under state regulations. These classes should be located adjacent to regular classes and not in an isolated location. The classroom should be organized to provide for small group activities, individual instruction and activity centers appropriate to each age level.

Curriculum

The educational program for the mild mentally handicapped serves those students whose learning needs cannot be met in the regular curriculum because of their reduced rate of learning. The program's main objective is to provide these students with an appropriate individualized program of instructional and support services in the least restrictive environment.

Presently, these students are placed in self-contained or inclusion classes on elementary, middle/junior high and senior high school campuses. The overall educational goal is to provide for the academic, social and vocational skill development that will assist these students in performing the basic competencies necessary to become self-sufficient participants in their community.

The curriculum for elementary students will initially be based on the Special Education Core Curriculum. This curriculum represents a basic list of competencies that students should master at each grade level. Students should remain in this program as long as possible before being removed from specially designed into an alternative program. Students moving to ARP will follow the Louisiana Separated Minimum Skills for Mildly Handicapped Students. Students are taught functional skills in math, reading, social studies, science and social living skills.

Curriculum for the moderate, severe/profound mentally handicapped

The instructional program is designed to achieve two major goals:

1. To enable the student to develop skills and competencies unique to the student's potential.

2. To develop these competencies enabling the student to achieve his/her maximum level of independence.

The curriculum for the moderately mentally handicapped focuses on functional skills and academics taught as they relate to the "outside" world. Students are integrated with non-disabled persons as much as possible. At the middle/junior high levels the program is composed of four areas: self-help, domestic, leisure/recreation, and vocational skills. At the high school the curriculum is composed of four areas: community, employment, domestic, and leisure/recreation. Students may be involved in vocational training or supported employment situations. The program places major emphasis on the following areas:

- Communication
- Self-Help Skills
- Social Development
- Motor Development
- Functional Skills
- Prevocational and Vocational Skills

In addition to the above, a Community Living Skills program has been implemented which will enable the student to develop his/her functional community living skills to his/her potential. Curriculum guides have been developed which give the program a current and diverse instructional base to achieve its goals.

Instructional setting

Individual instruction based on the student's IEP and small group instruction is essential. On regular campuses classrooms should be located in close proximity to a

restroom. The classrooms should be large enough to accommodate daily living instruction for the older students and group instruction for the younger students. Coordination of activities and techniques among professionals, both in and out of te system, is essential to maintain a consistent support for the student.

Strategies for Securing Social Integration

1. Students will follow school routine. Arrival and departure times for students with severe disabilities will correspond with arrival and departure times for the same age non-disabled peers.
2. Teachers of self-contained classes will follow regular routine of school day, (i.e., observe morning pledge, recess and lunch times).
3. Teachers will arrange for students with severe disabilities to attend school functions such as assemblies, sports event on campus, school fairs, dances, field trips, pep rallies, and other functions. Whenever more than one class with severe disabilities attends any one event, teachers should make efforts to disperse students across the event location in order that attention will not be called to large numbers of disabled children in any one area.
4. Students with severe disabilities should have access to non-disabled peers through established peer partner or peer tutor programs. Teachers will need to initiate contact with regular education teachers to recruit and train peer tutors or peer partners.
5. Students with severe disabilities will be integrated in regular education classes to the maximum extent. Non-academic classes such as homeroom,

art, music, P.E., shop, home economics, and other classes appropriate to individual students may be accessed. Teachers of students with severe disabilities will be responsible for securing regular class experiences. The regular class teacher should be trained by the special education teacher concerning special needs of integrated children. In addition, students in the regular classroom should receive disability awareness training as deemed appropriate by both teachers, parents, or administrators.

6. Students with severe disabilities who are integrated in regular classes or activities should be given a non-disabled "partner" or "special friend" to encourage positive transition into regular class activities.

7. Teachers will survey the school to determine available clubs or school organizations for integration activities.

Multiple Disabilities

Definition

Multiple disabilities means concomitant impairments (such as mental disabilities-blindness, orthopedic impairments-deafness, autism-orthopedic impairments, or emotional/behavior disorders-mental impairments), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that these students require specific special educational services to meet the needs which result from both/all impairments. The term does not include individuals with deaf-blindness.

Criteria for eligibility

Criteria 1 and 2 must both be met.

1. The full criteria for eligibility as determined by the evaluation of two or more of the conditions as described in this Bulletin must be met. Each of these conditions must additionally be to a severe or moderate degree. One of these disabilities may not be speech impairments, learning disabilities, or mild mental disabilities, and
2. The individual cannot be educated in a special educational program specifically designed for one of the impairments with additional related services for the other condition.

Classroom design

Individual instruction based on the student's Individualized Educational Program with some small group instruction is appropriate. Emphasis on self-help skills to increase independence is necessary. Classroom should be located adjacent to bathroom facilities

with hot running water. Rugs/carpeting should be available for therapies and group instruction. Alternating activities to allow for movement of students is extremely important. Coordinator of activities and techniques among professionals, both in and out of the system, is needed to maintain a consistent support system for the student.

Curriculum

The student's Individualized Educational Program determines whether the student will participate in:

1. Specially Designed Regular Instructional Program
2. Alternative To Regular Placement Program
3. Combination of the above

The majority of multiple disabled students will address the Separate Minimum Standards for Moderate, Severe, Profound Disabling Conditions.

Noncategorical Preschool

Definition

The definition according to Bulletin 1508:

Noncategorical Preschool is an exceptionality in which children ages 3 through 5, but not enrolled in a State approved kindergarten, are identified as having a condition which is described according to functional and/or developmental levels as mild/moderate or severe/profound.

Children who exhibit a severe sensorial impairment, severe physical impairment or who are suspected of having autism, severe language disorders, or of being gifted or talented shall be identified categorically. Three through five year old children meeting the eligibility criteria for speech impairments may be classified as having Speech Impairments.

Classroom design

The classroom should have the following learning centers:

- Sensory-Cognitive (Manipulative-Fine Motor)
- Social and Dramatic Play
- Science and Nature
- Art Center (space for painting)
- Library Center/Quiet
- Music

In the Mild/Moderate preschool setting, space will be designated not only to include various centers, but also space to work in large group settings to foster language skills as well as motor skills. The classroom setting for severely and profoundly functioning preschool children will need to insure much open space for mobility, support, and positioning activities.

Center based programming is a full day. Class sites are located in representative geographical sites throughout the parish. Preschoolers whose primary impairment is speech and language are served at neighborhood school sites on an individual basis.

Curriculum

The primary curriculum used for students in pre-kindergarten skills and in the mild moderate setting is the Chapel Hill Program Learning Accomplishment Profile/Program (LAP), High Reach, and Portege.

The areas of curriculum in the preschool program are: Academic, Communication, Motor, Self Help, and Social. Integration with typical preschoolers is encouraged in activities in Kindergarten classes (when available). Integration should occur daily at recess, lunch, and assemblies.

Exiting the program

Students who will be six years of age by September 30th shall exit the preschool program. The process for re-evaluation for a school-aged program should have been initiated if it is anticipated that the student will be in need of continued special education services.

Students, who turn six years of age after September 30th are eligible to remain in the program and may be re-evaluated at any time during the school year if the three year re-evaluation is not due. The re-evaluation should take place in the spring semester of the student's last year in the preschool program.

Orthopedic Impairments

Definition

orthopedic Impairments are severe orthopedic impairments that adversely affect a student's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., Cerebral Palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

Criteria for eligibility

Criteria 1 and 3, or 2 and 3 must be met.

1. Muscular or neuromuscular disabilities that significantly limit the ability to move about, sit, or manipulate the materials required for learning, or
2. Skeletal deformities or abnormalities that affect ambulation, posture, and body use necessary in school work, and
3. Impaired environmental functioning that significantly interferes with educational performance.

Classroom design

Instructional settings for the students with orthopedic disabilities will vary depending on the severity of the disabling condition. Small group and individual work are appropriate. Emphasis on gaining independence is encouraged. Adequate time should be allowed for students to complete each activity and feel successful. The physical setting should be spacious enough to allow for adaptive equipment and movement of students throughout the room. Handrails in hallways and within the classroom are needed to

facilitate independence and freedom of movement. Worktables or desks should be high enough for students in wheelchairs or with braces. Aisles should be wide enough to accommodate crutches, canes and wheelchairs. Classroom doors should be wide and lightweight to allow independent use by the orthopedically handicapped student. Chalkboards should be placed to allow students the opportunity for board work. Resting areas should be made available to students.

Resource description

In the resource classroom at the elementary, middle school and junior high levels, students are taught skills in the subjects that are considered weaknesses. At the high school level, reading in the content area is taught 25% of the time. The remainder of the time is used to tutor students in other academic areas. Students are assisted with study and test taking skills as well.

Curriculum

The student's Individualized Educational Program determines whether the student will participate in:

1. **Specially Designed Regular Instructional Program** addressing State Minimum Standards - using regular textbooks, pacing charts, etc., for regular education (time schedule will be arranged to meet individual student's needs).
2. **Alternative to Regular Placement Program** - addressing Separate Minimum Standards whether for Mildly Handicapping Conditions, or Moderately, Severely, or Profound Handicapping Conditions.

3. Combination of the above.

Other Health Impairments

Definition

Other health impairments mean limited strength, vitality, or alertness, because of chronic or acute health problems and includes such conditions as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, or attention deficit disorders.

Criteria for eligibility

Criteria 1 or 2, and 3 must be met. To be placed in this category, the individual shall possess:

1. Disabilities which result in reduced efficiency in school work because of temporary or chronic lack of strength, vitality, or alertness, including such conditions as those specified in the definition, or
2. A severe disability which substantially limits one or more of the student's major life activities (that is, caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working), and
3. Impaired environment functioning which significantly interferes with educational performance.

Severe Language Disorders

Definition

Severe language disorders is a type of communication impairment resulting from a physical or psychological condition which seriously interferes with the development, formation, and expression of language and which adversely affects the educational performance of the student. [This category does not include students whose communication impairment is primarily due to mental disabilities, autism, or a hearing impairment.]

Criteria for eligibility

Criteria 1, 2, and 3 must all be met. The individual shall demonstrate:

1. Expressive, integrative, and/or receptive language skills three or more standard deviations below the mean in at least one of the above areas as measured by standardized test(s) and other appropriate diagnostic evaluation of language functioning, as compared to the student's developmental level. Developmental level shall be determined through non-language assessment procedures.
2. That communication is an effort or is unintelligible.
3. Significant deficits in educational progress are evident.

Among placement options for Severe Language Disordered students are self-contained classrooms and self-contained/resource classrooms (SLD or Generic). When the placement is self-contained/resource classroom, the SLD teacher becomes the resource teacher for the SLD student.

Classroom design

The classroom should be large enough to accommodate at least twelve students. The

pupil teacher ratio (PTR) for the self-contained/resource classroom is 4-12; for self-contained 4-9. Classroom instruction consists of individual and small group instruction. Desks should be spaced sufficiently apart in order that the SLD student not disrupt other students when he/she is sounding out seat work, an essential component of daily instruction.

Curriculum

The program focuses on developing language concepts, language structure, sequential language, and skills for learning. Teacher made materials may be used. Students proceed at the rate appropriate to their individual learning style according to the short term objectives written on the IEP. The long term goal is to move the students into the mainstream of school and life using the most effective means available.

Speech-Hearing-Language Services

Overview of program

The Speech-Hearing-Language Program provides a continuum of services for communication disabled students, including procedures for early identification, diagnosis, consultation, referral, habilitation, instruction, and evaluation. Depending on the need of the communication disabled students, speech-hearing-language services may range from one per week (direct) to one time per semester (tracking/monitoring). Consultative services are provided a minimum of once per month. Communication disorders may be exhibited by impairment of any one or combination of the following:

- Articulation
- Language
- Voice
- Fluency

Speech-Hearing-Language services are provided for those students appropriately identified according to the guidelines of State Bulletin 1508. Services are provided for students, ages 3-21.

Frequency and intensity of therapy sessions are scheduled according to the severity of the communication impairment. In some cases, the IEP may determine that regularly scheduled parent counseling and instruction are necessary rather than therapist-student sessions.

Classroom design

The speech therapy room should be located near the administration unit and should

be as quiet as possible, due to the confidentiality aspect of therapy and the emphasis placed on "listening" and "self-monitoring" of speech. The speech pathologist works with individuals and small groups. The classroom is often the most appropriate setting for speech/language services.

Record keeping

A daily Log Book is maintained by the speech pathologist and is a record of each therapy session including student's responses, difficulties encountered, etc. Attendance for students is also recorded in the Log Book. A detailed speech therapy file is maintained in the Area Speech-Hearing-Language Office; this file includes all confidential information, including a log of all telephone conferences with physicians, parents and other professionals concerning the student. Each six weeks, parents are sent progress reports on the IEP short term objectives.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Individual Education Program (IEP)

(Forms Used for IEP)

- Parent Notice of Initial IEP Conference
- Parent Notice of Review IEP Conference
- Parent Notice of Interim IEP Conference
- Educational Rights of Exceptional Children
- Least Restrictive Environment Policy Statement
- IEP Instructional Plan
- IEP Program/Services
- IEP Placement/Least Restrictive Environment
- Site Determination
- Special Transportation Needs
- Due Process Checklist for IEP
- Progress Report (every six-weeks)

Introduction

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is the basis for educational programming for students identified as **exceptional**. The term **exceptional** includes gifted students along with students with disabilities in the requirements for providing special educational services. **Student** means any eligible exceptional person aged birth through 21 years served by the school system.

The four types of IEPs are outlined below according to the **IEP Handbook, Bulletin 1530**:

- The **INTERIM IEP** is developed and implemented to provide temporary special educational services concurrent with the evaluation of a student suspected of being exceptional, who has been receiving special education in another state or school system or who possesses a severe low incidence impairment documented **only** by **the Special Education Supervisor**.
- The **INITIAL IEP** is developed for an exceptional student who has met criteria for one of the exceptionalities outlined in the **Pupil Appraisal Handbook, Bulletin 1508**, and who has never received special educational services from an approved Louisiana school/program.
- The **REVIEW IEP** is reviewed and revised at least annually or more frequently to consider the appropriateness of the program, placement, and any related services needed by the student.
- The **TRANSITIONAL IEP** is developed when a student's re-evaluation determines the student is no longer exceptional. This IEP allows the student

to participate for up to one year in a transitional special education program.

The Educational Rights of Exceptional Children (Legal Mandates), the least Restrictive Environment Policy statement and the Extended School Year Fact Sheet should be sent to the parents with the parent notification letters prior to interim, initial, review and transitional IEPs.

The Educational Rights of Exceptional Children (Legal Mandates) must be presented to the parent again at the Extended School Year IEP meeting.

In depth information on the development of the four types of IEPs and instructions for completing the IEP forms follows.

Initial IEP Development

Responsibilities

A student is initially determined to be exceptional through the individual evaluation process. The responsibility for making a formal commitment of resources to ensure a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for a student identified as exceptional rests with the school system in which the student resides.

The school system is responsible for initiating the assurance of FAPE regardless of whether the system will (1) provide all of the service directly or through interagency agreements, (2) place the student in another system or in a nonpublic facility, or (3) refer the student to another school system for educational purposes. Special School District #1 (SD#1) is responsible for identified exceptional students and students initially classified as exceptional while residing within that system's jurisdiction.

The responsibility for offering FAPE is met through the process of developing an

IEP. This process includes:

- communication between the school system and the parent;
- IEP meeting(s) at which parents and school personnel make joint decisions and resolve any differences about the student's needs and services;
- a completed IEP/placement document which describes the decisions made during the meeting(s), including the special education and related services that are to be provided;
- formal assurance by the school system that the services described in the document will be provided;
- parental consent for initial placement;
- procedural safeguards for differences that cannot be resolved mutually; and
- initial placement and provision of services as described in the IEP/placement.

The school system is required to offer FAPE to those exceptional students whose ages fall between 3 and 22 years. The school system may choose to offer and provide services to exceptional students ages birth to 3 years. If the school system chooses to provide services, all the requirements of FAPE apply.

Responsibility for providing services to an exceptional student continues until

- the student receives a state diploma or certificate or
- the student reaches his/her 22nd birthday. (If the 22nd birthday occurs during the course of the regular school session, services shall be provided until the end of the school year.)

The school system is not responsible for providing services if, after carefully

documenting that they have offered FAPE, the parents choose to voluntarily enroll the student elsewhere or indicate that they refuse special education services. Documentation of these parental decisions should be kept on file.

Timelines

An initial evaluation is considered "completed" when the written report is disseminated by the pupil appraisal staff to the administrator of special education programs. A school system has a maximum of 30 calendar days to complete the IEP/placement document for an eligible student. During this time, two activities must take place and be documented.

1. **Written Notice(s)** that the school system proposes to provide FAPE through the IEP process must be given to the parents.
    - The notice (one or more) must be provided in the parent's native language or must be given using other means of communication, whenever necessary, to assure parental understanding.
    - The notice must indicate the purpose, time and location of the IEP meeting; who will be in attendance by position; the parents' right to bring other participants to the meeting; the student's right to participate (when appropriate); and the name of the person in the school system the parents can contact if and when they have questions or concerns.
    - Additionally, if the school system has not already done so, the system must inform the parents of their right to an explanation of the

evaluation report and of their right to an independent evaluation if the parents disagree with the current evaluation.

2. An **IEP meeting** that results in a completed IEP/placement document must be held. The IEP meeting should ve a vehicle for communication between parents and school personnel to share formal and informal information about the student's needs, educational projections, and services that will be provided to meet the student's needs. The completed IEP/placement document is a formal record of the IEP committee decisions. The timeline for completion of the document is intended to ensure that there is no undue delay in providing a free, appropriate public education for the student. The document is "completed" when the form is completed and signed by the school system's supervisor of special education or other officially designated representative.

Additional notes about timelines

Summer recess - When an initial evaluation report is completed within the 30 days prior to the summer recess or during the recess, the initial IEP timelines apply. The school system should request parental approval through written documentation to delay the initial IEP meeting until the first week of the next school session. However, if the parents wish to meet during the summer recess, the school system must ensure that a teacher is present. Either the teacher or the school system's representative should be appropriately certified.

Children approaching age 3 years - The date on which a child first becomes eligible for services may occur after the child's evaluation or last required re-evaluation. In

such a case, a school system has the following options:

- to develop the IEP/placement document following the evaluation or re-evaluation and to indicate the date that services are to begin, or
- to develop the IEP/placement document immediately before the school system is required to provide services.

Parents refuse services - In some cases when the school system is in the process of offering FAPE to an eligible student (i.e., after written notice has been sent.), the parents will clearly indicate that they do not wish to have any special educational services for the student.

- If the student receives regular educational services in the public school and the school system does not consider it necessary to pursue the matter, the responsibility for initial IEP/placement development within these timelines is over.
- If the student is to receive or is receiving regular educational services in a non-public school and the parents want to maintain that arrangement, the student is considered "voluntarily enrolled," and the school system has completed its responsibility for offering FAPE. Initial IEP timelines no longer apply to any subsequent IEP that may be completed for the student.

In any event, the IEP must be in effect before services are provided.

Participants

At any initial IEP meeting, the following participants must be in attendance: an officially designated representative of the school system, the student's teacher, the student's

parent(s), and a person knowledgeable about the student's evaluation procedures and results. The student, as well as other individuals the parents and/or school system may deem necessary, should be given the opportunity to attend. Documentation of attendance is required.

1. An officially designated representative of the school system - The school system representative must have knowledge of educational programs, related services, and placement settings and must have the authority to commit the system's resources to implement the IEP. A school system must have on file and must disseminate within the system a policy statement naming the kinds of persons who may act as the official representative of the school system. Representatives may include the supervisor of special education, IEP facilitator, principals, or assistant principals. The student's teacher, however, shall not act in this capacity.

2. Parents - Parents are equal participants in the IEP process in discussing the special education and related services needed for the student and deciding which placement and other services are appropriate. As such, one or both of the student's parents should participate in the initial IEP/placement meeting(s). Other committee members must rely on parents to contribute their perspective of the student outside of school. Parent insight about the student's learning style, temperament, ability to work in various environments, and acquired adaptive skills is of vital importance to the committee in making decisions about the student's needs and services.

School systems must take measures to ensure that parents and all other committee members, including sensorially impaired and non-English speaking participants, can understand and actively participate in discussions and decision making. These measures (i.e., having an interpreter or translator) should be documented. School systems shall further ensure that, for those parents who cannot physically attend the IEP meeting(s), every effort is made to secure parental participation. After documenting attempts to arrange a mutually convenient time and place, several possibilities remain.

- The meeting(s) may be conducted via telephone conference calls
- The IEP committee may consider parental correspondence to the school regarding the student's learning environment, any notes from previous parental conferences, and any data gathered during the screening and evaluation period.
- Visits may be made to the parents' home or place of employment to receive parental suggestions.

If, however, every documented attempt fails and the IEP/placement document is developed without parental participation, the parents must give written informed consent for initial placement before any special education or related service may begin. Parent signature is not required for review IEP conferences.

NOTE: When an exceptional student has a legal guardian or has been assigned a surrogate parent by the school system, that person assumes the role of the

parent during the IEP process in matters dealing with special educational services. When an exceptional student is emancipated, parental participation is not mandated. Additionally, if the school system has been informed that a parent is legally prohibited from reviewing a student's records, the parent may not attend the IEP meeting(s) without permission of the legal guardian.

3. Evaluation representative - An evaluation representative will attend an initial IEP conference when requested. The person may be a member of the pupil appraisal team that performed the evaluation or any person knowledgeable about and able to interpret the evaluation data for that particular student.

4. Teacher - For a student who is being considered for special education for the first time, the teacher may be, at the option of the school system, either the student's regular education teacher or a teacher who is certified in the area of the student's exceptionality; or both teachers may attend. The student's regular education teacher can provide information about the student's current performance and rate of learning in the classroom and share ideas about realistic expectations. When the regular education teacher is selected, at least one other committee member (employed by the school system) should be qualified in the area of the student's exceptionality.

5. Student - The student should be given the opportunity to participate in the development of the IEP. The appropriateness of the student's participation should be decided by the parents prior to the IEP meeting. In some cases, the student will share responsibility for goals and objectives.

Student participation should be considered essential in situations such as:

- when designing a special education work-study program may limit the student's participation in a different but equally beneficial program
- when the student is gifted or talented
- when the student at the middle or secondary school level is mildly/moderately handicapped
- when the student's exclusion from the meeting violates access to participation that is guaranteed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

6. Other individuals - Parents may choose to bring other persons such as friends, advocates, or independent evaluators to the IEP/Placement meeting(s). Attendance of these persons should be documented.

The school system may recommend the participation of other persons when their involvement will assist the decision-making process. Examples include adapted physical education teacher, related services providers, and representatives of other agencies who have been or will be involved with the student. These persons may participate by either providing written recommendations about services from the committee to consider or by attending the meeting. Parents must be given prior notice of all persons who will attend. **This notice should be documented.** The school system should exercise professional judgment in determining when the number of participants may detract from the IEP committee's effectiveness.

When the school system responsible for the initial IEP/placement process considers referring or placing the student in another school system, the responsible school system must ensure the participation of a representative of the receiving system at the IEP meeting. The school system must ensure the attendance of a representative of an approved nonpublic school if the student is voluntarily enrolled.

Program and placement decisions

The IEP committee has responsibility for determining the special education program and placement for an exceptional student. The evaluation report and information brought by committee members form the basis for making program decisions. Program decisions must be made and written in the following areas that form the basis for the placement:

- current educational performance
- annual goal(s)
- short-term objectives for each annual goal
- program (including physical education program) and related services required
- the standards the student will address (Louisiana grade-level standards or separate minimum standards)
- the length of the instructional program according to state regulations

Following a discussion of the student's program needs and the development of goals and objectives, the committee must choose a setting(s) in which the program needs will be addressed. The term "placement" refers to the setting or class in which the student will

receive special educational services. The following are some settings that the IEP committee may consider:

1. Regular classroom with itinerant/resource room services or supplemental services
2. Self-contained special class in a regular school
3. Special day school
4. Residential special school
5. Homebound instruction

For students identified as gifted or talented, three examples of educational settings that the IEP/placement committee may consider are:

1. Regular classroom with itinerant/resource room services
2. Regular classroom with a resource center for gifted students
3. Special classes

In the process of selecting an appropriate setting(s), the IEP committee must be informed of the following rules and requirements governing placement:

- least restrictive environment rules
- homebound placement rules
- duration of placement rules
- direct service rules
- nonacademic setting requirement
- alternative to direct services: nonpublic placement
  out-of-district placement

Federal and state regulations address each of these rules. The official school system representative shall be knowledgeable about placement considerations and is responsible for informing the IEP committee members. Section 2 and 3 of this handbook provide more details on each of these rules and requirements. The IEP committee must participate in decisions made about the placement; however, the school system has the right to select the actual school site in view of committee decisions.

Related services decisions

Related services are those services that are required to assist an exceptional student to benefit from special education. A school system, as part of its requirement to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), must provide any related services for which there is a documented need. The decision regarding related services must be made in view of each student's unique needs. The sources of documentation will be the individual evaluation report and any subsequent evaluation reports submitted by therapists, physicians, psychologists, and so forth. Examples of related services may include speech services; physical or occupational therapy; audiological services; orientation and mobility training; interpreter and counseling services; and transportation services.

NOTE: In addition, materials and/or equipment (e.g., tape recorders, large print books, adapted vocational equipment (etc.) should be considered as program modifications and described as such on the IEP.

The IEP committee must consider each related service that is recommended on the evaluation report(s) and document its decisions on the IEP form. For example:

- list all services recommended by the committee as well as service

provision schedules, dates, etc.

- explain committee decisions not to include a recommended related service.
- explain delays in providing any related service listed on the IEP. Note: This delay, or hardship, in no way relieves a system from providing the service and documenting every effort to provide it in a timely manner.

The participation of related service personnel is extremely important during the IEP meeting. Involvement should be either through direct participation or written recommendations.

Additional notes about related services

- Adapted physical education (APE) is not a related service; APE is a direct instructional program. A student who requires only adapted physical education may be eligible fo related services since adapted physical education is a direct instructional program.]
- A student who is classified only as speech impaired may be eligible for related services since in this case the speech therapy is the special education program.

Parental approval

A school system must obtain formal parental approval before it can provide a student with special education and related services in any setting. Consent includes the following:

- The parent/student has been fully informed of all relevant information in a manner that is clearly understandable to he parent/student.
- The parent/student formally agrees in writing and understands that the consent may be revoked by parent/student in writing at any time.

After the parent/student has given formal written approval, the IEP is in effect. This means that the IEP has been developed properly, is regarded by both the parent/student and the school system as being appropriate for the student, and will be implemented as written. The parent must be provided a completed copy of the IEP/placement document that is signed by the official representative of the school system.

Parental withholding of approval

Parents may take issue with all or some part(s) of the initial program, placement, or related services proposals. The school system and the parent should make conciliatory attempts to resolve the disputes, including making modifications to the propose program, placement, and related services. If no conciliatory agreement is reached and if no modifications will be made, the school system is required to notify the parents of this decision in writing. In this case, the student must remain in the current educational setting or be offered a different placement within the school system, if the parents agree, until the matter is resolved.

The parents have the right to file for a due process hearing in this situation. The school system, likewise, has the right to attempt to override the parental decision to withhold approval by appealing to the appropriate State Court within the time prescribed by

law.

Implementation of the IEP

Implementation of the IEP means that the student begins participating in the special education placement and receives the related service as written on the IEP/placement document. A school system must begin providing services as stated on the IEP within ten calendar days. The date of initiation of services shall be noted on the IEP. When meetings occur during the summer or other vacation periods, a delay may occur. When meetings to develop the initial IEP/placement document occur just prior to the summer vacation, the date of implementation of services may be delayed to the beginning of the next school year if the parents agree.

A school system is required to provide a report on the student's progress to the parents a the same time as report cards are provided for all (non-exceptional) students in the system. A school system or a public or non-public facility that serves exceptional students exclusively shall send a report to the parents in accordance with its established reporting policies. Dates noting mastery of short term objectives must be noted on the IEP form as soon as possible after achievement. Progress reports should provide information on student achievement related to the attainment of the objectives and the annual goal(s) stated on the IEP. Progress reports should include information provided by instructional personnel who are responsible for addressing the goals and objectives of the student. A school system may decide on the format(s) and method to be used for reporting progress for any student.

Review IEP Development

Responsibilities and timelines

A school system is required to conduct **IEP meetings at least annually** to review an exceptional student's IEP. The IEP committee should:

- review the student's progress toward achieving the annual goals and objectives;
- gather current information from teachers, therapists, psychologists, parents, the student, re-evaluation reports, and other assessment data about the student's performance in curriculum areas such as, academic, social, self-help, motor, vocational, and communication areas;
- review the special educational long-term goals for the student;
- review the student's special educational and related service needs;
- revise, as necessary, the annual goals and short-term objectives;
- incorporate, as needed, any behavior management plan(s);
- make update decisions about the student's program, placement, and related services; and
- determine the least restrictive environment currently possible for the student.

Specially designed regular instruction

Special education students in **"Specially Designed"** programs address the Minimum Skills. They are eligible to take the LEAP and CAT tests and will earn Carnegie Units in high school.

A plan for the student's return to regular education should be discussed and

documented on IEP forms at every IEP conference. In most instances students can return to regular class when they have reached an academic standing one year below their chronological grade level. Students should gradually return to the mainstream as an appropriate status is reached in each curriculum as noted in the core curriculum data sheets.

Self contained **"Specially Designed"** students are assigned a grade level but movement to the next grade level homeroom is based on a combination of chronological age and mainstreamed classes rather than grading and promotional policies relevant to regular students. It is the responsibility of the IEP committee to determine homeroom grade placement with consideration given to the overall educational plan and other factors such as maturity, age at which the student will be ready to begin earning Carnegie Units, etc. **It is usually not in the student's best interest to change him from a self contained setting to a resource setting at a new school level** (elementary to middle/junior high or middle/junior to high school). If a "Specially Designed: student is still self contained during the year he is in 8th grade, the IEP committee should strongly consider keeping him in 8th grade for an extra year in a Resource setting before he begins the Carnegie Unit program.

Resource program

In the resource classroom at the elementary school level students are taught skills in the subjects that are considered weaknesses. They are also taught learning strategies that will allow them to capitalize on their strengths. At the middle/junior high school level students are presented a 6th week study skills course in addition to material to remediate weaknesses. Reading in the content area is taught 1/4 of scheduled class time at the high

school. The remainder of class time is used to tutor students in their other academic areas. Students are assisted with study and test taking skills as well. High school students may only receive one reading resource Carnegie credit per semester, although they may attend a second resource period for no credit.

Other Carnegie credits may be given by certified high school special education teachers upon two conditions:

1. All regular state course requirements are met.
2. Principal approval

Resource teachers are to serve as consulting teachers. Responsibilities of the consulting teacher include the documented tracking of resource student's progress within the regular classes. It also includes assisting and working with the regular teacher in attempting to ease the student into the regular education curriculum.

Factors to consider in determining if a student should be in the alternative or specially designed program

At the elementary level, consideration should be given to placing the student in an alternative program when functioning levels are significantly below expected grade placement. The student should remain in specially designed regular instruction as long as it appears he may be able to progress through a regular high school program. Students who are taking the LEAP and CAT tests with a wide discrepancy between the functioning levels and grade levels need to be considered for alternative placement. The decision between "Alternative" and "Specially Designed" program is particularly crucial at the middle school level. Each case must be carefully considered on an individual basis, but the committee

should raise serious questions about continuing the "Specially Designed" program at the high school level if the student cannot function on at least the 6th grade level in reading and math.

Alternative to regular placement

Special education students placed in "Alternative" programs address the "Separate Minimum Standard for Handicapped students". They do not take the LEAP and CAT tests and do not earn Carnegie Units for high school graduation.

Grades for "Alternative" students are based on the student's accomplishment of skills and objectives as listed on the IEP. Movement to a higher grade level homeroom should follow the chronological age of regular students unless the IEP committee decides to keep the student two years in the same grade level homeroom due to immaturity.

It is vital that the "Alternative" students progress to the High School Vocational Program with sufficient years left in the educational setting to acquire job entry level skills. It is also important for a student's LRE that he/she be placed in an age appropriate setting. However, beginning in the 9th grade, he/she will need to earn a specified number of credits in order to move to the next grade level. In order to receive alternative credits, the student will have to successfully complete 70% of the annual IEP objectives for each class. Grade classification will be based on earned alternative credits as follows:

Grade Level	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Graduation
Age	11	12	13	14				
Alternative Credits					5	11	17	23

IEP Amendments

The IEP may only be amended when the change to the existing IEP does not constitute a significant program or placement change. The IEP anniversary date remains the same when the IEP is amended.

Procedures for amending an IEP are as follows:

1. Add a new (additional) meeting date at the top of each page of the student's current IEP as follows: Amended (date).
2. Show by signature on the Program or Placement page that the required IEP participants met.
3. Make and initial the necessary changes to the existing IEP. Add additional Instructional Plan pages for new goals and or objectives if space is not available on the existing pages.

NOTE: Do not complete a new Program or Placement page to amend an IEP.

4. The dated signature of the parent and ODR should be added to the Placement page to indicate approval of the changes(s).
5. Send a copy of all pages of the amended IEP to the Area Office with a Placement Checklist form noting amended IEP.

IEP Conference - Letters & Forms

I. Letters of Notification for IEP Conferences

1. Initial IEP
2. Review IEP
3. Interim IEP

II. Prior to the IEP conference, parents must be provided with the following information:

1. Educational Rights of Exceptional Children (Legal Mandates)
2. Policy Statement (Least Restrictive Environment)
3. Extended School Year Fact Sheet

III. Forms to be used at the IEP Conference

1. Instructional Plan
2. Programs/Services
3. Placement/Least Restrictive Environment
4. Site Determination Form (when appropriate)
5. Special Transportation Needs (when appropriate)
6. Due Process Checklist

- Progress Reports will be used to document achievement each 6 weeks

Extended School Year Services

A school system is required to provide special educational and related services in excess of the traditional 180 school days to students with disabling conditions whose disability is such that the lengthy summer break in programming poses serious obstacles to

overall acquisition of skills. The provision of educational and related services in excess of the 180 school days to students with disabilities is accomplished through the **Extended School Year Program (ESYP).**

The legal basis for extending the school year for certain students with handicaps is stated in **Section 450 of Bulletin 1706: Regulations for Implementation of the Exceptional Children's Act (R.S. 17:1941 et seq.)** an court decisions handed down relative to the 180-day rule.

The contact person for ESYP is

RELATED SERVICES

Related services in the educational setting

Related Services are defined as transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist an exceptional child to benefit from special education. Related services include speech, hearing/language services and audiological services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, interpreter services, orientation and mobility training, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluative purposes. The term also includes health services, social work services in schools, and parental counseling and training. In the educational system, related services are provided only when it can be documented that the student needs or requires the services to benefit from his/her special education program. The majority of the related services provided in the educational setting are interventions in the form of therapy such as speech, occupational or physical therapy and counseling. The focus of therapies provided in the educational environment are different from those provided in a hospital, clinical or rehabilitative setting. The purpose of this information is to assist school personnel and members of IEP committees to recognize and appreciate the differences between services that are clinically or habilitatively based and those that are educationally related.

Therapy in a clinical environment is generally an adjunct to medical treatment for acute and/or chronic conditions. The goal of clinical therapy is for global functioning through the use of a variety of modalities. Many students who receive related services through the school system, have a lifelong chronic condition. Therefore, the services are provided only to help the student access educational services and benefit from his/her

educational program. In the school, educational goals hold a primary position while related services may be undertaken only to support the educational goals. Related service providers assist the student to improve his/her skills so that he/she can function better in the educational program.

The programs provided by related services personnel must be collaborative and focus on functional skills and adaptations that promote the attainment of educational objectives. Related service providers in the school deliver a wide range of services in the educational setting and actively seek ways to incorporate the contributions from other disciplines. School based related service personnel demonstrate a high level of competence and continually work to educate others by welcoming questions, explaining terms and concepts and avoiding discipline-bound jargon. These professionals are an invaluable resource for educators and parents. In order to successfully implement comprehensive and coherent educational programs for special education students, all disciplines involved must be involved and contribute to the IEP process.

Making the decision to provide a related service

When a student is determined to be at risk through screening, an evaluation is conducted by appropriate and qualified related service personnel. The related service professional is charged with the responsibility of completing a comprehensive, discipline specific assessment in compliance with Bulletin 1508, Pupil Appraisal Handbook.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM (ESYP)

Extended school year program

The Department of Special Education provides an extended year program for exceptional students who qualify for this service. The program is oriented to meet the individual needs of each student and its aim is to maintain and/or prevent a significant loss of acquired skills caused by an extensive break in the student's educational program. This is accomplished by providing worthwhile and meaningful instructional activities and the related services the student may need to meet his/her educational goals.

Students are referred for this program by their teacher and/or any related service provider. Information pertaining to guidelines and procedures are disseminated to Special Education teachers during the school year keeping them informed of any changes. Participation in the program is determined by teacher referral and appropriate documentation submitted by the teacher and any related service provider.

Mandated guidelines for the Extended School Year Program as specified by the LAURA I Consent Decree include:

1. All students who are 3-22 by the ESYP screening date, classified as disabled, and having a current IEP must be screened annually for ESYP. The screening date is determined by the State Department of Education. Teachers are informed through memos, and through inclusion on the Master Calendar.
2. Parents of students who are disabled must be given a copy of the ESYP fact sheet annually.
3. Teachers and Related Service Personnel must use the new eligibility criteria

established by the State Department of Education (Bulletin 1870) to determine a student's eligibility for ESYP. Parents should be given opportunities to be actively involved in the process.

4. Parents must be given written notification of the ESYP eligibility determination decision not later than the fifth operational day after the ESYP Screening date.

5. Teachers must submit the Screening Determination Form to the Director of Special Education or designee by the Screening Date.

6. Teachers must submit a copy of Regression/Recoupment Data Form to the Director of Special Education or designee for those students screened using this criterion.

7. An ESYP IEP must be developed for each student eligible for ESYP using the guidelines included in Bulletin 1871 - Program Standards for Extended School Year Program Services.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM FACT SHEET

What- is extended school year program (ESYP)?

ESYP is an extension of the school year program into the summer months for students with a handicapping condition. ESYP is designed to help the student to continuously move forward in the educational process.

Who may be considered for ESYP?

All handicapped students enrolled in special education programs may be considered for ESYP. Reasons students may qualify for ESYP include: 1) loss of skills due to breaks in instruction; 2) students at a critical point of instruction; 3) severe self-injurious behavior; 4) a need for continued support to maintain paid employment (specific to students ages 16-21); or 5) a need for support at the transition from school to adult living (specific to students age 21 at the on-set of the school year). Other considerations are included for students with excessive absences due to health conditions and for those who enter the school program after January 1.

How is eligibility determined?

Service providers (special education teachers and relates service personnel) screen students using information including grades, documentation or skill loss, evidence of major behavior problems, etc., which they have collected throughout the school year to determine who may benefit from ESYP. Parents may be asked to assist in the data collection process when appropriate.

How and when are parents notified of screening results?

Parents are notified in writing of screening results by the school your child currently attends or by the local school board. Notification will be made within 5 operational days of the screenings date. If your child does not qualify for ESYP services and you disagree, you have the right to ask that the IEP committee meet to review the decision.

What will be covered in ESYP?

The IEP committee, including parents, teachers, an officially designated representative, student and others, if applicable, will determine the program. Only selected goals and objectives on the current IEP may be addressed during ESYP. Related services currently being provided may also be extended.

How is the length of ESYP determined?

The number of days and hours per day each student will need to spend in ESYP is determined by the IEP committee and is based upon the actual time needed for the student to progress toward achievement of the selected goals and objectives.

Where will ESYP be offered?

ESYP may be offered in the school your child regularly attends, in a centrally located school, at home, or in the community.

Will transportation be available for ESYP?

Transportation must be made available for all children eligible for ESYP. Transportation may be provided on a school bus, on a contracted carrier, or by parents. Under all circumstances, all students must be offered free transportation.

PUPIL APPRAISAL

SERVICES

Pupil Appraisal Services

Description

Pupil appraisal services are an integral part of the total instructional program of a school system. The purpose of pupil appraisal services is to assist students who have learning problems, adjustment problems, or other special needs by providing services to students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel including:

1. Assistance to teachers in the development and implementation of behavioral and/or instructional interventions.
2. Evaluation of students to determine need for special services, such as special education.
3. Consultation with parents, teachers, and other personnel on topics such as instructional or behavioral modifications, exceptional students, and student development.
4. Training of school personnel on selected topics.
5. Interpretation of evaluation findings to school personnel and parents.
6. Direct support services to students with learning or behavior problems.
7. Related services to exceptional students.

Pupil appraisal personnel are not limited to providing services solely to students referred for an individual evaluation. Many students experiencing learning problems can be helped through pupil appraisal support services in the regular classroom, enabling the student to benefit from the regular instructional program and eliminating the need for special education. Major goals of pupil appraisal personnel are to be child advocates and to

assist students to remain in and profit from the regular educational program whenever possible. When a student, as a result of an individual evaluation, qualifies for special education, pupil appraisal personnel will provide recommendations for the types of services needed to assist the teachers and parents of the student in providing an appropriate special education program.

Qualified examiners

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and R.S. 17:1941 et seq. require that a student suspected of being exceptional receive a comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation conducted by qualified examiners. Qualified examiners include pupil appraisal professionals certified by the State Department of Education, and professionals from other agencies or in private practice, as described in this section.

1. Professional members of a pupil appraisal system include certified and/or licensed educational diagnosticians, school social workers, school nurses, adapted physical education specialists, speech/hearing/language specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and certified school psychologists.
2. School systems shall regularly employ certified pupil appraisal personnel to conduct individual evaluations, but may also:
    a. Use qualified examiners who are available from the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, the State Board Special Schools, or other public agencies.

b. Contract with private qualified examiners to provide specialized assessments.

c. Use the student's teacher(s) as members of the evaluation team.

d. Use a combination of the approaches listed above.

3. Regardless of the approach used for conducting individual evaluations, school systems retain full responsibility for the individual evaluation. Any failure by an employee or contractor to meet the requirements of this Bulletin constitutes a failure by the school system to comply with Bulletin 1706, the regulations for the implementation of the Exceptional Children's Act; R.S. 17:1941, et seq.

4. Professionals in private practice who provide evaluations for educational use must meet the standards of and comply with the rules and regulations set by their respective statutory professional boards. Certification by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is not required for these persons; however, Educational Assessment Teachers or Educational Consultants are required to be certified by the Department of Education, since licensing for independent practice does not exist.

a. Professionals employed by another State agency must meet the professional standards of that agency and be qualified through training to conduct evaluations.

b. The results of an evaluation conducted by these professionals may be used by a school system in determining a student's eligibility for

special education. It remains the school system's responsibility to ensure that the student is evaluated and his eligibility determined in accordance with the requirements of Bulletin 1508.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS

FOR

MILD ALTERNATIVE

STUDENTS

Secondary Programs for Mild Alternative Students

High school programs

The high school alternative programs were developed for students who require a functional academic program which parallels courses in regular education but which have a strong vocational component. There are two programs of study for alternative high school students with mild disabilities: the Adult Performance Level Curriculum for Secondary Alternative Students (APL), and the General Education Development Curriculum for secondary Alternative Students (GED) programs. Placement in a particular program will be based upon academic functioning levels and teacher recommendations.

APL program

The APL program was designed as a vocationally oriented curriculum for alternative students who will be eligible to receive a certificate of achievement upon graduation. Two different curriculum guides have been developed for the APL program. The APL 1 program is for students who function from a 0 to 2.9 grade level. The emphasis in the APL 1 program is on adaptive behaviors and expressive communication skills with less focus on reading skills. The APL 2 program is for students whose academic functioning levels are from the 2.9 grade level to the 5.0 grade level or above. The APL 2 program incorporates functional academic skills and vocationally directed skills.

GED program

The GED program is an instructional program designed for alternative students who, while unable to earn a regular high school diploma, demonstrate the ability and motivation to address the skills required for a GED diploma. The GED program is generally divided

into a Pre-GED class for 10th and 11th grade students and a GED class for students who have mastered the Pre-GED competencies. To be successful in the program, a student must have adequate academic abilities and good attendance, good behavior and motivation. The criteria for eligibility for the GED program is as follows:

A. Pre-GED

1. Students must be age 15 or above.
2. Students must attain a 5.0 grade equivalent level or higher on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Level — (Form 5 or 6)-Reading, Language, and Math.

B. GED

1. Students must be age 16 or older.
2. Students must attain a 7.5 grade equivalency level or higher on TABE, Level D (Form 5 or 6)-Reading, Language, and Math.

C. Combination Pre-GED and Ged (schools with small numbetrs of students)

1. Students must be age 16 or above.
2. Students must attain a 6.0 grade equivalency level or higher on TABE, Level M (Form 5 or 6)-Reading, Language, and Math.

IEPs

In order to receive credit for any course, a student will have to successfully complete 70% of his/her annual IEP objectives for the class. Therefore, it is imperative that the student's IEP reflect the appropriate courses for that school year. If the student selects courses that follow the normal sequence for the APL programs, it will be possible to write

the student's IEP in May for the next year or at the beginning of the school year. All new students will have to have IEPs developed as soon as they enroll in school. As students change their schedules, their IEPs will need to be amended to reflect the appropriate courses.

Although there are required courses in the mild alternative program, the course content should be taught on an individual basis. There are essential skills that should be addressed in each class. However, teachers should individualize mastery levels of these skills, performance standards, and compensatory techniques.

Vocational electives

All ninth grade students are require to take a vocational elective. Generally, special eduation students should be scheduled for: General Technology (Industrial Arts), Consumer Homemaking I (Home Economics), or Keyboarding/Introduction to Business.

Vocational training/Work Experience

A two-hour vocation training block is required for the eleventh and twelfth grades. This curriculum can be presented at the high school or a career center.

Promotional Policies

Grade classification

Earned credits rather than age appropriate placement will determine a student's grade classification. For example, a student must receive 5 alternative credits to move from the 9th to the 10th grade. Students who do not receive enough credits to be promoted to the next grade will remain in the grade failed, but advance to the next course in sequence not the courses that were passed. If a student does need to

repeat the ninth grade, the placement should always be on a high school campus.

Transfer students

Transfer students will be placed based on a review of the courses they have passed at specific grade levels. Transfer students can be given credit for equivalent courses taken at other schools in the subject areas of English, math, social studies, reading and science. Unless a student has taken specific vocational courses, all other transfer credits will be counted as electives. The teacher with IEP authority along with the special education administrator can assess these transfer credits on an individual basis. They may need to make up specific classes when they are in the twelfth grade in order to meet the requirements for graduation.

Assessment guidelines

In order to determine academic functioning levels, pre-testing should be done for all classes immediately upon a student's placement. Additional information may also be obtained through appropriate CAT testing or throughj criterion referencved testing, such as the Brigance.

Content area measurements have been developed for the APL courses to determine mastery levels. A student will have to pass at least 70% of the competencies for each course and/or demonstrate a significant improvement (20%) from pre- to post- testing in order to pass each class.

Graduation

In order to graduate and receive a Certificate of Achievement, a mild/alternative student will need to earn 23 units of alternative credits. In order to receive alternative

credits, the student will have to successfully complete 7% of the annual IEP goals for each class. Course content will be taught on an individual basis. The two programs of study in the alternative high school program are comprised of both required classes and electives. Both the APL program and the GED program require 16 alternative units of academic classes and 7 units of vocational classes and electives.

The following guidelines apply specifically to the graduation requirements for GED students:

1. After a student obtains a 13.0 grade equivalency level on all areas of the CAT 19, if the student is 17 years of age or older, he/she is eligible to take the GED test.
2. The CAT 19 E, the Adult Education GED Recommendation, and documentation for any requested testing modifications should be sent to the GED Testing Specialist.
3. After notification of scheduled test date, the student will need to withdraw from school prior to taking the test and can re-enroll in school after taking the test.
4. If the student had met all of the graduation requirements in the alternative program, once he/she re-enrolls in his/her homebased school, he/she is eligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies.
5. If a student passes the GED test during the school year but fails to re-enroll in his/her homebased school, or does not adhere to the attendance policy, the student is not eligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies

SCHOOL BUILDING

LEVEL COMMITTEE

School Building Level Committee

Who is it?

A group of personnel designated from among a local school staff and the resource staff ancillary to them.

Why is it?

To bring the brain power of the group to bear on the continual effort to insure for students the best possible education to meet their individual needs.

How is membership determined?

It is recommended that the committee consists of a special education teacher, a regular teacher, the referring teacher, the principal or administrator designee, and a pupil appraisal representative. However, on any given occasion, the make-up of the committee shall be governed by the nature of the concerns. The basic membership of the committee shall consist of a minimum of two school staff members, one of which is designated by the principal as chairperson.

Functions of the SBLC

According to the State Department of Education, the School Building Level Committee has the following functions:

- To plan appropriate actions and/or programs for students who are exhibiting various kinds of difficulties in the school.
- To provide coordination for the delivery of services for individual students who require program modification, support services, and supplemental assistance.

- To assist in determining appropriate school-based instructional program(s).
- To provide the greatest number of services to students with the least amount of duplication.
- To increase appropriate communication among school staff members relative to students with handicaps or difficulties.
- To provide a screening vehicle for referral to pupil appraisal services.

Though the committee must adhere to state and local guidelines, within this framework it is limited only by its own creativity in contributing to improved educational services for the students.

School Building Level Committee Process

Initiation of process

1. Teacher, parent, or other person/agency contacts Principal about concerns. The Principal refers student to the chairperson.
2. Chairperson gives Lanser Phase 1, Student Diagnostic Information 1 and 2 and any needed checklist to the teacher.
3. SBLC Chairperson sends parental notice of a SBLC Referral to the parent.
4. Teacher gives completed forms to the SBLC Chairperson.
5. SBLC Chairperson requests vision and hearing screening.
6. Chairperson schedules meeting and notifies participants (including parents) and appropriate Pupil Appraisal staff (if applicable) of School Building Level Committee Meeting.

7. Conduct First Meeting.

First meeting

1. Review Referral forms and academic screening material
2. If no further action deemed necessary
   a) Record meeting on SBLC Report 1 and log information
   b) Obtain principal's signature on SBLC Report 1
   c) Send completed Report to parent
3. If further action, then develop Intervention Plan:
   a) Identify problem(s)
   b) Describe deficit skills or behaviors (SBLC Report 1)
   c) Develop intervention/task strategies (SBLC Report 2)
4. Schedule next meeting if appropriate.
5. Request other necessary screenings when appropriate i.e., speech or motor.
6. Request medical information, when appropriate.

Second Meeting and any Subsequent Meetings

1. Obtain all screening results prior to meeting (if possible).
2. Discuss results of screenings.
3. Discuss progress of intervention/tasks and document on SBLC Report 2.
4. Committee makes a decision on the SBLC Report 1 (if applicable).

Continue to modify intervention

1. Record meetimng on SBLC Report 1
2. Schedule next meeting

or

Refer to pupil appraisal for evaluation (screening decision #2 or #3 on SBLC Report 1)

1. Pupil Appraisal member must be in attendance at meeting
2. Record meeting on SBLC Report 1, amd log information
3. Complete SBLC Report 1 and 2
4. Obtain principal's signature on SBLC Report 1
5. Send completed referral to Pupil Appraisal Staff

No further services needed or regular education with no support services

(Screening Decision #1 and #4 on SBLC Report 1)

1. Record meeting on SBLC 1 and 2 (if appropriate)
2. Complete SBLC 1, SBLC 2, (when appropriate)
3. Obtain principal's signature on SBLC Report 1
4. Send completed referral to parent(s), and file in cumulative folder.

or

Regular education with support services (Screening Decision #2 on SBLC Report 1)

1. Record meetimg on SBLC Report 1 and/or support services referral
2. Complete SBLC Report 1 and/or support services referral
3. Document support services to be implemented
4. Obtain principal's signature on SBLC Report 1 and/or support services referral
5. Send completed referral to appropriate pupil appraisal staff.

NOTE: Pupil Appraisal must be notified of SBLC for support services before the

meeting is scheduled.

or

504 evaluation (Screening Decision #5 on SBLC Report 1)

1. Record meetimg on SBLC Report 1 and log information
2. Complete SBLC Report 2 (if appropriate)
3. Determine if any additional information is needed
4. Designate person responsible for obtaining additional information
5. Obtain principal's signature of SBLC Report 1
6. Send Parent Consent Form and 504 Rights to the parent
7. Complete Determination of Section 504 Handicap and Accommodation Plan (if appropriate)
8. Place appropriate documentation in cumulative folder.

or

Dyslexia/related disorders evaluation (Screening Decision #6 on ABLC Report 1)

1. Record meeting on SBLC Report 1 and log information
2. Complete SBLC Report 2 (if appropriate)
3. Obtain principal's signature on SBLC Report 1
4. Send Parent Consent Form and 504 Rights to parent
5. Follow procedure as outlined in Buletin 1903
6. Complete Report of Findings as soon as all necessary information is available
7. Meet with parents for completion of Program

Determination/Accommodations Plan (if appropriate)

8. Place appropriate documentation in cumulative folder.

SURROGATE PARENT

PROGRAM

Surrogate Parent Program

A school system shall assign a surrogate parent whenever it determines that one of the following situations exists:

1. That the child is a ward of the State (including a ward of the court or of a State agency).
2. That it is unable to locate a natural parent or legal guardian by calls, visits, or by sending or the legal guardian and allowimg 20 operational days for a response of the intention to appoint a surrogate parent.

A person with whom the child is residing, who is not the natural parent nor the legal guardian but who is acting as the parent of that child, and is qualified as a parent as defined in these regulations, may be appointed by the school system as a surrogare parent if that person meets the criteria for being a surrogate parent.

A surrogate parent shall represent the child in all matters relating to the identification, individual evaluation, and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free, appropriate public education, including being present at an individual evaluation interpretation meeting, IEP/Placement meeting and annual review meetings, and at any hearing concerning the child.

A method for determinimng whether a child needs a surrogate parent and for assigning a surrogate parent must be developed and implemented by each school system in a manner which ensures that:

1. A person assigned as a surrogate paremt has no interest that conflicts with the interests of the child and is not a present employee of any state or state

supported agency invloved in the education or care of the child.

2. The person assigned has knowledge and skills that insure adequate representation of the child.

3. All surrogate parents who cease to carry out the responsibilities or no longer meet the criteria of eligibility are removed from eligibility.

Payment of fees for service as a surrogate parent does not, in and of itself, render a person an employee. Any person appointed as a surrogate parent is protected by the "limited liability" of R.S. 17:1958.

What is the role of the schools?

The schools:

- determine which children to refer to the surrogate parent program.
- make referrals to the surrogate parent program.
- observe the rights and are aware of the responsibilities of the surrogate parents.
- contact the surrogate parent program for needed technical assistance.
- work actively with surrogate paremts.

How should eligible children be referred to the surrogate parent program?

1. Surrogate parent program request form should be completed and sent to:

2. Upon receipt of the surrogate parent program's trainer(s) reviews the

information to determine if a surrogate parent is needed. Verification of information and gathering of additional information is done by phone. Request for surrogate parent is also initiated by phone calls from school system personnel. (Emphasis is on serving the child and making certain the appropriate person is trained and appointed surrogate parent.)

3. Training is arranged and conducted.
4. Certificate of training is given.
5. Appointment of surrogate parent is authorized by the Supervisor of Special Education.

COMMUNITY SKILLS

EMPLOYMENT EXPLORATION

JOB PLACEMENT

Community Skills

The community-based program is available to students with moderate/severe disabilities. Participation in the program is an IEP decision and reflects goals and objectives pertaining to the use of environments in the community that are necessary for self-sufficiency such as grocery stores, malls, banks, restaurants, and the use of telephones.

Outcomes are the skills and opportunities students of all ages must have to realize meaningful participation in activities at home and in the community. Outcomes must accommodate both current and future environmemnts.

Employment Exploration

The Employment Exploration program provides students with moderate/severe disabilities who are 15 years or older with opportunities to participate in real work sites. These work experiences are short termed, non-paid, developed by and monitored by the teacher. Participation in the program provides a profile of student competencies as they relate to specific employment areas and support needs after graduation.

Job Placement

The Job Trainers work with mild special education exiting seniors. Their primary responsibility is job placement and monitoring. Job training encompasses pre-employment skills such as making career decisions, preparing a resume`, filling out job applications, and interviewing.

Placement services include canvassing the labor market, talking to prospective employers, amd monitoring the student's job performance. Other job responsibilities

include LRS referrals and assistance, vocational assessment, on-the-job- training, IEP input and development. When appropriate, the Job Trainer assists the students with accessing mentorship, Vo-Tech cooperative educaiton programs, and post-secondary opportunities.

FORMS